# Debt and Credit Aff

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### Bad Debt

#### Welcome to the latest project of the United States imperialism – a new type of imperialism a process of economic warfare where the United States uses their economic might on the global south as an invisible war one that is meant to sustain the empire of the US – the United States sanction regime is structured through its debt regime but rather than owed debt, they force sanctioned countries into a debt regime where they are at the whims of the West

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Although the United States utilized sanctions throughout the Cold War, the bulk of the sanctions were aimed at the Soviet Union and its allies, their success severely limited by the fact that they were not heavily reliant on American products or services (Becker, 1987). Even when the United States targeted non-Soviet allies, these sanctions were also constrained since target states could turn to the alternative superpower for support (Damrosch, 1994). Thus, in addition to creating the conditions for the resurgence of American capitalism in the 1990s, at a more minute level, the Soviet Union’s collapse also made sanctions infinitely more effective and attractive to American officials. Commonly regarded as an alternative to war, it is more accurate to view sanctions as another form of war. As argued earlier, imperialism manifests in multiple ways, from ostensibly benign activity like diplomacy and trade deals to overtly hostile activity like military intervention and conventional warfare. Sanctions thus represent another way to wage war, sometimes in conjunction with the overtly hostile methods, other times by themselves. The rise of American or American-led interventions in the 1990s is plain: Operation Desert Storm in 1991, Operation Uphold Democracy in 1994, Operation Just Cause from 1989 to 1990, Operation Restore Hope in 1992, Operation Joint Endeavor in 1995, and Operation Noble Anvil in 1999 (Bacevich, 2016; Gibbs, 2009; Girard, 2002; Kapteijns, 2013; Sanchez, 2002). Less obvious, however, are the ways in which sanctions aided these war efforts. Iraq is perhaps the most well-documented case of both sanctions and military intervention by the United States. Operation Desert Storm was more complicated than the United States and its allies simply standing up for Kuwait and the principle of state sovereignty (something the previous invasion of Panama and the future interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo would show). Other more important reasons for the defense of Kuwait included, (1) the threat of Iraq controlling Kuwait’s oil fields and perhaps even Saudi Arabia’s oil fields, which would have put 20 percent of the world’s oil under the control of an unreliable and possibly hostile state (Collins, 2019), (2) Saddam Hussein’s declining utility once he had fulfilled his primary duty of containing Iran (O’Reilly, 2008, p. 168), (3) the long-held American goal of establishing a permanent military presence in the Middle East (Johnson, 2004, p. 33), and (4) the United States’ strategic goal of controlling the flow of oil in the region (Callinicos, 2009, p. 224). In Iraq, UN and US sanctions played an invaluable role, first in establishing an embargo which weakened the Hussein government (Alnasrawi, 2001) and then most importantly, ensuring Iraq remained a docile power in the Middle East and abided by the interests of the United States and its allies after the Gulf War (Nakhaei, 2022). The international sanctions on Iraq caused enormous hardship for its civilians. The 661 committee, a governing body created by the UN to monitor and approve humanitarian exceptions to the economic embargo, proved to be wholly inadequate. The 661 committee regularly denied or delayed Iraq’s requests for food and consumer goods, despite the country’s chronic food shortages throughout the 1990s. Arguing that imports could be used to rebuild Iraqi industry (something expressly forbidden by the United States) and/or aid the military, the 661 committee regularly denied goods such as aluminum cans for food packaging, salt, powdered milk, raw cotton, sewing thread, and at one point, infant’s milk (Gordon, 2012, pp. 54-63). Under its ‘dual use’ philosophy, the 661 committee even denied computer equipment for hospitals and schools, medical textbooks, equipment for teaching science at the secondary and university levels, fertilizer and pesticides for food production, and animal vaccines necessary for raising cattle (Gordon, 2020). Iraq’s foreign reserves were also frozen throughout the 1990s, as was its ability to export oil, its main source of revenue. This led to hyperinflation, mass unemployment, and the government’s inability to fund public services like water sanitization, electricity, and its health care system, eventually leading to the outbreak of epidemics like malaria and typhoid (Nakhaei, 2022). Jeremy Scahill, a journalist based in Iraq during the 1990s, reported, “Every pediatric hospital felt like a death row for infants,” and major hospitals, “reeked of gasoline,” because doctors used it as a desperate substitute for sterilizers, disinfectant, and bleach (as cited in Batinga, 2022). As Gordon (2012) argues, the death and destruction caused by the sanctions were not unintended consequences, they were widely known ramifications that, in the eyes of American officials, were justifiable for the greater good, namely the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. As former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright infamously responded, when asked if the 500,000 dead Iraqi children were worth the cost of the sanctions in 1996, “I think this is a very hard choice, but the price- we think the price is worth it,” (Mahajan, 2001). Another well-documented case in the 1990s is the breakup of Yugoslavia, facilitated by NATO intervention and UN and US sanctions (Babić & Jokić, 2010). The Bosnia and Kosovo interventions served two main goals for the United States: (1) maintain the American military presence in Europe, especially in view of the heightened imperial competition, and (2) secure the conditions for privatization in Central and Eastern Europe (Gowan, 1999, pp. 305, 293-294). As mentioned earlier, NATO was established during the Cold War as a military alliance to ostensibly protect Western Europe from Soviet interference. After the Soviet Union fell, there were serious questions as to whether NATO needed to continue. Thus, for the United States, reconfiguring NATO as an organization to protect Europe from any threat became a top priority (Gibbs, 2009, pp. 30-33). The continuation of NATO ensured American influence in the affairs of European security and also served as a way to contain other imperialist states, especially newly unified Germany (Gowan, 1999, pp. 304- 305). Secondly, post-communist Eastern and Central Europe represented huge economic opportunities for a diverse set of American sectors, ranging from finance to manufacturing all the way to weapons manufacturers. The interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo thus served as an important interjector to ensure Yugoslavia developed along capitalist lines that benefited the United States (North, 2016, pp. 382-384). Sanctions aided these efforts in various ways. In 1992, after only Serbia and Montenegro remained part of Yugoslavia, the UNSC passed resolution 757 which suspended Yugoslavia’s access to the international financial system and imposed an embargo, banning all trade in and out Yugoslavia except for food and medicine (Elich, 2021). Additionally, the United States blocked the Yugoslav government from accessing any of its property or significant financial assets held in the United States or at any American overseas financial branches (Lewis, 1992). These efforts crippled Yugoslav industry, limited medical supplies, prompted runaway inflation that topped 1000 percent, and created enormous hardship for the people of Yugoslavia by making food staples, cooking oil, gasoline, and household goods scarcer and more expensive (Arya, 2008; Elich, 2021). At the time, one Yugoslav diplomat remarked, “The United States wants Yugoslavia within the framework of the new international order, not outside it, and certainly not opposed to it. It has been saying this both publicly and in conversation” (Elich, 2021). Elsewhere, Haiti and Panama also experienced the combined effort of sanctions and military intervention. In Haiti, the United States, the Organization of American States, and the UN began a series of comprehensive sanctions under the seemingly noble goal of restoring democracy and returning the previously deposed Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the first democratically elected president in Haiti, back to power. Though the United States was originally involved in the coup d’état that ousted Aristide, he was still tremendously popular in the country (Engelberg, 1994). After Aristide agreed to liberalize the economy upon his arrival, the United States and the UN initiated a comprehensive sanction regime, and later military intervention, to return the newly US-friendly Aristide back to power (Saccarelli & Varadarajan, 2015, pp. 180-181), in the process creating mass unemployment, major gasoline and electricity shortages, and an exodus of people fleeing hunger, poverty, and crime in the capital (Gibbons & Garfield, 1999). In Panama, the United States claimed that its years of sanctions, resulting in Panama’s inability to access over $375 million of its assets and severe difficulty with exporting its commodities (Pine, 1989), were intended to overthrow its leader, Manuel Noriega, a notorious figure in the illicit drug trafficking industry (Glass, 2018). After years of deprivation failed to topple the Noriega government, the United States invaded Panama in 1989-90 to safeguard its geopolitical and economic interests in the Panama Canal that were being threatened by Noriega, a once-valuable CIA asset who had now outlived his utility as the Cold War came to a close (Sanchez, 2002). As these few examples show, the revanchist nature of the United States in the 1990s very heavily relied on the combination of sanctions and military intervention. The primary significance of sanctions, however, during and since the ‘sanction decade’, lay their ability to wage what Gordon (2012) calls ‘invisible war.’ Sanctions, as shown in the previous chapter, are widely perceived as humane, or at least sufficiently humane. The importance of these seemingly benign tools of statecraft can be seen in the context of what Moyn (2021) refers to as the shift towards ‘humane war,’ referring to the general sanitization of war through modern military reforms like the abandonment of large-scale aerial bombardments in favor of ‘precision’ drone strike and the transition from ground invasions to the use of special forces. To be sure, this sanitization is purely one sided; the American public is spared from reading about the horrors of conventional warfare (Robinson, 2018), but the death and destruction continues, even under these newly sanitized methods (David & Ness, 2022). In this regard, sanctions represent an incredibly important weapon for the United States since it can wage ‘invisible war’ and advance the interests of American capital, all while masking the violent nature of imperialism. Another method of waging invisible war is through the utilization of the opaque global financial system. Given the powerful role of the United States in the global economy and its influence on the institutions that govern it, sanctions represent a potent tool to enforce or advance the interests of the United States, without needing to resort to overtly hostile tactics. Specifically, the waning but still dominant position of the US Dollar and the American financial sector’s clout in international trade and banking allows the United States to implement sanctions with relative ease and force the compliance of other states. As the next chapter will show, US sanctions can directly or indirectly prevent sanctioned states from trading and/or utilizing the US dollar and its financial institutions - a major factor, since the US Dollar remains the base currency of global trade. On the significance of the US Dollar, Norfield (2015) argues, “given the fact that most world trade and finance is denominated in dollars, the US can be seen as the provider of ‘global money’, able to decide which policies to pursue based upon its domestic interests and on what it deems viable for the global economic and monetary system,” (p. 168). Indeed, since the most important global commodities like oil, natural gas, metals, food products, pharmaceuticals, and beverage products (coffee and tea) are priced and sold in US Dollars, it is incredibly difficult for states to avoid using and requiring access to the Dollar (Chen et al., 2014). Even if states seek to bypass US sanctions by not using the US Dollar and instead use their own national currencies, it remains exceedingly difficult to use smaller, less valuable currencies in a global financial system that prioritizes the Dollar and, in most cases, has some connection to American financial institutions (Norfield, 2015, p. 169). Through the pervasive reach of American finance capital and direct government institutions like the Federal Reserve Bank, also known as known as the ‘world’s central bank,’ “widespread use of the dollar means that most trade and financial flows are settled through plumbing controlled by either the US state or entities regulated by the US state” (Schwartz, 2020). This puts the United States in an incredibly strategic position to offer, temporarily withhold, or bar states from accessing the US Dollar and its financial institutions that remain paramount for participation in the global capitalist system. Of course, the United States is not the only imperialist state to use monetary policy to enable exploitative relationships; a good example is France’s ‘Franc zone,’ a monetary system that binds 15 former colonies in Africa to the French Treasury through the use of a common currency. The Franc zone, Pigeaud and Sylla (2020) succinctly argue, is a, “neocolonial system of domination that the French state established on the eve of the independence of the former colonies, with the precise aim of preserving the advantages of the colonial pact,” (pp. 3-4). The privileged position of the US dollar, however, extends to the entire globe, and though the power of the dollar is diminishing (Plender, 2021), it still allows the United States to utilize sanctions more effectively than any other state. Lastly, another important factor that makes sanctions a distinctly powerful tool for the United States is its influence on the mechanisms that enable the flow of finance across the globe. Service providers Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT), Fedwire, and Clearing House Interbank Payments System (CHIPS), though operating at different scales and offering different services, all facilitate transaction between banks around the world that amount to trillion of dollars per day moved, essentially, “greasing the wheels of global capitalism” (Pantich & Gindin, 2012, p. 95; U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2006). Belgium-based SWIFT is by far the largest facilitator of financial transactions and payments in the world. It connects over 11,000 banks in 200 countries and is overseen by the 10 largest central banks in the world as well as the major private banks like Citibank and JPMorgan Chase (Zarate, 2013, pp. 49-50). Fedwire and CHIPS are based in the United States. Fedwire connects over 7,000 banks and is under the formal control of the Federal Reserve system, while CHIPS is run by private banks and connects 46 of the largest banks in the world (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2006). SWIFT, Fedwire, and CHIPS thus process virtually all international financial transactions and are subject to US jurisdiction, directly in the case of Fedwire and CHIPS, or de facto in the case of SWIFT (Hutman et al., 2022). This incredible power and sway in the apparatuses that govern international finance means the United States has the ability to block or greatly limit a state’s ability to carry out basic financial transactions needed to survive via primary sanctions, or in the case of secondary sanctions, compel third-party states into conforming to its objectives out of fear of economic and political ostracization (Ruys & Ryngaert, 2020). Keeping in mind that modern capitalism is heavily dependent on finance, the headquarters of which are concentrated in New York City and London, and access to credit, loans, bonds., most states will be forced to comply with American sanctions, unless they have a large enough economy to internally produce necessary goods and or withstand the consequences of defiance (Raval et al., 2019).

#### The process of empire is built off of the debt and credit relationship – the logic of the empire allows the US to be the worlds greatest debtor one that seeks colonial conquest across the globe – the resolution is a attempt to reconceptualize debt that must be repaid to the empire

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Since the midnineteenth century, national debt has played a vital role in the predatory practice of the nexus of capital and the settler state. The “enchanter’s wand” through which the national debt begets speculative capital has more recently been endowed with an even greater magic. The Fourteenth Amendment recognizes and validates the public debt, and recent debates about the “debt ceiling” attempted to make urgent the question of the US government’s ability to pay back its loans. Still, the United States is the greatest debtor nation in the world, and thus far its debt has been rolled over indefinitely.23 This is the story of how the United States rigged the game of world finance in 1971. It is the story of debt as imperialism, or what economist Michael Hudson calls superimperialism.24 The United States exercises debt imperialism by virtue of, and not despite of, its status as the greatest debtor in the world. How has the United States been able to convert indebtedness, a position of weakness, into a position of relative strength and, indeed, into the very basis of the world’s monetary and financial system?25 Significant elements in the cruel magic of this alchemy are gold and paper. In 1971, Nixon floated the dollar, depegging it from the gold standard. Since then, the United States has become the world’s greatest debtor and has reached a level of indebtedness without world-historical precedent. The United States replaced the gold standard with a transformed US Treasury Bill, a government-issued debt, as an international monetary standard. Essentially, what this has meant since the early 1970s is that foreign banks with a surplus of dollars can no longer exchange them for gold. Rather, the banks must purchase US Treasury Bonds, meaning US Treasury debt, thereby extending a continuous loan to the United States. This, counterintuitively, is an important source of US imperial power, an effective debt imperialism through which the US keeps itself afloat by inflating its capital markets and generating growing levels of budget deficits via foreign capital investment. It is a debt apparently without ceiling, precisely because the loan that the world continues to extend to the United States has become an integral, structural feature of the world economy. That is, US hegemony is significantly leveraged via a debt that is rolled over indefinitely and does not have to be repaid. How can a global superpower also be a global superdebtor? As Giovanni Arrighi and others have asked, how, in other words, can the United States have hegemony without hegemoney?26 Given the central role of US global finance in the world economy, a US default on its massive debt would radically destabilize the architecture of racial capitalism. The specter of such a destabilization and attendant fears of apocalyptic risk are in effect exploited as a form of US imperial domination. Put simply, the US nationstate is too big to fail. As such, one significant feature of US settler modernity is debt imperialism, or the creation of a temporal exception through which the United States is able to roll over its debt indefinitely. The United States does not need to conform to the homogeneous time of repayment even as it imposes that standard temporality on other populations and nations, and even as those who have been subjected to US military and imperial intervention are structurally positioned within a financial and affective economy of an indebtedness that is perpetual. The threat or actual use of institutional violence (via, for example, effective unilateral veto power in formally multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) and the threat of military retaliation compel the world to submit to the rigged rules of the game. This is a kind of metapolitical authority, or the authority not only to apply or enforce laws, as well as discipline and punish when necessary, but also to define the very contours of what constitutes law and political authority as such. US debt imperialism is the economic logic and form of US militarism and military empire, one that is heavily concentrated, as I have observed, in Asia and the Pacific. This loan that the world is continually compelled to extend to the United States is in many ways a form of tribute or, more accurately, a protection racket in recent decades. Debt imperialism is at once the literal cost and effect of military empire. US debt has been significantly incurred via military spending, and it is no coincidence that the United States has a strong military presence in its creditor nations, like Germany, Japan, and South Korea. In fiscal years 2016 and 2017, the US military budget was projected to be close to $600 billion annually, accounting for over 50 percent of all federal discretionary spending. And in March 2017, President Trump requested a 10 percent increase for 2018.27 As Melinda Cooper so aptly puts it, “The irony here is that the exorbitant military expenditure of the United States has been financed through the very debt imperialism it is designed to enforce!”28 It is no wonder, then, that US debt imperialism has been described as the “greatest rip-off ever achieved.”29 Thus far, even the entrance of China and China’s status as the greatest US creditor have not witnessed a radical destabilization of US debt imperialism, even as this has disrupted the longstanding US fantasy since the latter half of the nineteenth century about gaining access to China’s fabled market. US military empire has been called an empire of bases, proliferated globally, especially in Asia and the Pacific, during and after World War II, the Cold War, on through the more recent War on Terror, and now as part of the new twenty first century Asia Pacific pivot. Yet if we consider, again, the very founding of the United States, we would recall that the young nation’s ever westward expansion during the nineteenth century depended on the stationing of soldiers in more than 250 military forts. The establishment of an overseas empire beginning with the 1898 Spanish American War also depended on the expansion of overseas bases. During World War II, “island hopping” across the Pacific (through Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and Okinawa) for the bombing of Japan witnessed an expansion of US bases, as did the inheritance of the British basing structure. By 1945, over 44 percent of all US military facilities overseas were located in the Pacific, with the extensive global network stretching from the Arctic Circle to Antarctica.30 And although the more than 2,000 overseas installations during World War II had dwindled to 582 by 1949, as the Cold War escalated, especially in Korea, the number by 1957 had risen to 815, and yet higher to 1,104 by the peak of the Vietnam War. Two- thirds of these bases were in South Korea, Japan and Okinawa, and West Germany, and they continue to be located there as of the release of the 2009 Base Structure Report of the US Department of Defense.31 Notably, before US forces withdrew in 1992, the former US colony of the Philippines hosted one of the most significant and vast US military complexes in the world, employing seventy thousand Filipinos and thirteen thousand US military personnel. Clark Field became the second largest US airbase on the planet, and Subic Bay became the largest American naval facility outside the United States.32 In terms of land, the US military controls 29 million acres of territory, with approximately 635,000 acres of that located overseas and made available by host governments. In terms of cost and value, military installations within the continental United States are worth more than $600 billion, and overseas installations more than $124 billion. Crucially, these figures do not include recent base buildups in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, nor do they include the value of the twenty-three thousand buildings, structures, and installations leased by the United States in Asia and Europe. The United States, in other words, is not only the biggest military power in the world but also the world’s biggest landlord and leaseholder.33 The public debt of settler colonialism has thus been linked with a more specific debt driven by military spending in the post–World War II conjuncture. Settler colonialism is at once military empire’s proving ground, obscured condition of possibility, and imbricated partner in violence. Settler colonialism conditions and makes possible debt imperialism. Scott Morgensen makes the important observation that the biopolitics of settler colonialism and the displacement of Native peoples and nations “form a transnational proving ground within settler societies to produce a white settler state for imperial projection abroad.”34 In the case of the United States, the territoriality of settler colonial and imperial projections of power include not only the fifty states (or incorporated territories) but also a variety of unincorporated and discontiguous territories. In the Pacific, these are the unincorporated territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the three Compact of Free Association nations of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. If debt imperialism is the promise that does not require keeping, this proving ground, or stolen land, or fatally irradiated territory in the case of the Marshall Islands, is the promise that does not have to be made at all. As I have written elsewhere, to speak of the militarization that produced and continues to reproduce the United States as a white settler state and military empire is to speak of a way of life.35 Militarization exceeds the temporal parameters of war, the spatial demarcations of military bases, the functional ends of military institutions, and the enlistment of military personnel. Militarization, in other words, is all of these things, yet more. Eisenhower’s warning in his 1961 farewell address about the dangers of a “military-industrial complex” acquiring unwarranted power turns out to have been prescient and necessary, but ultimately unheeded. Today, a constellation of phenomena, historical processes, and subjectivities can be properly characterized, and need to be urgently critiqued, as militarized. These include militarized humanitarianism, militarized diaspora, militarized adoption, militarized prostitution, militarized kinship, militarized capitalism, and militarized settler colonialism.36 What does it mean that the term militarized serves as a correct adjective, appearing in a host of modifiernoun couplings that at first seem oxymoronic or unlikely but upon closer critical examination are compatible, coconstitutive, and verging on the tautological? In their important anthology Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and the Pacific, Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho analyze militarization “as an extension of colonialism and its gendered and racialized processes,” interrogating how “colonial histories constitute the conditions of possibility for ongoing forms of militarization.”37 Invasion and annexation of Hawai‘i, territorial acquisition of Guam, genocidal colonial conquest of the Philippines, occupation of Japan and Okinawa, wars in Korea and Vietnam these have been some of the militarized US campaigns in Asia and the Pacific spanning over a century thus far. Asian and Pacific migration to the United States has been significantly constituted by this protracted history of militarized intervention, especially its Cold War phase. As Cynthia Enloe observed, the Pacific Rim is strung together with a necklace of US military bases, violently producing a “militarized inter connectedness.”38 This necessitates intellectual, political, and cultural projects that can take that interconnectedness into critical account while being attentive to local specificities, differences, and hierarchies. To name just a few examples, the history of Japanese empire and militarism in Asia and the Pacific, Asian settler colonialism in Hawai‘i, and specific developments such as the May 2012 USJapan agreement to withdraw nine thousand US troops from Okinawa and transfer them to Guam, Hawai‘i, and Australia challenge assumptions of a coherent or homogeneous “Pacific Rim” or “AsiaPacific.” Yet to the extent that Asia and the Pacific have been and continue to be strategic sites and staging grounds of US settler modernity, or the locus of a militarized interconnectedness, they and their futures are enchained. While we can use the terms militarization and militarism interchangeably, we might also think of militarization as the process that both contributes to and is the effect of militarism. Next, militarism, in turn, indexes something much more pervasive than the collusion between the military and the arms industry named by Eisenhower’s military industrial complex. We might conceptualize instead “regimes of militarism” as the colonial and neocolonial nexus of state and capital that generates a proliferation of military logics beyond formal military institutions and sites, and beyond the warmaking, peacekeeping, and security functions of the military itself. Regimes of militarism constitute US liberal military empire, and they pervade the ideological and institutional, the material and discursive, the global and local, and act as a structuring force and logic not only in international geopolitical relations but also in the daily and intimate lives of (neo)colonized and gendered racial subjects. These regimes of militarism come with a high price tag: they drive US debt imperialism. As I discuss below, even as these regimes of militarism incur a debt that the United States does not need to repay, they install a figurative economy of what we might call militarized indebtedness onto the colonized. That is, they are made to feel indebted to the United States for its military intervention, often rescripted as “liberation” or, in the case of the Cold War, as the championing of freedom against communist totalitarianism. This conjunction of military empire and settler colonialism, or settler modernity, is a debt relation linking statecraft and capital. If settler modernity is an incomplete project, an ensemble of relations requiring continual re-creation and renovation, it mirrors the capitalist “delirium” of debt imperialism and of the debt form. As Cooper argues, “In the sense that the debt can never be redeemed once and for all and must be perpetually renewed, it reduces the inhabitable present to a bare minimum, a point of bifurcation, strung out between a future that is about to be a past that will have been. It thus confronts the present as the ultimate limit, to be deflected at all costs.”39 She goes on to observe that the American state, insofar as its continued self-reproduction coincides with the temporality of perpetual debt, is a nation that in economic terms has become purely promissory or fiduciary. This suggests a double movement in which “the very loss of foundation is precisely what enables the United States to endlessly refound itself, in the most violent and material of ways.” In this sense, debt imperialism is at once deterritorializing and reterritorializing, at once speculative and materialist; “the endless revolution (rolling over) of debt and the endless restoration of nationhood are inseparably entwined. The one enables the other. And the one perpetuates the other.”40 This dialectic of revolution-restoration, to elaborate on the contextual remarks I provided earlier on the very founding of the US nation, is the very logic of settler colonialism as both a structure and an event. And settler colonialism, the foundational and literally territorial condition of possibility of the United States, cannot be acknowledged as such, as the debt that is owed to Native Americans. This, conjoined with debt imperialism, the debt that is acknowledged but perpetually rolled over—the promise never made that makes possible and is conjoined with the promise never kept—attempts to deterritorialize and revolutionize, yet the US nation must also reterritorialize and restore or refound itselfwarp where the future and the past morph into each other without ever finding grounding in the present.41 If the unmade promise resides in an unacknowledged past, and the unkept promise can only be said to be that when the future itself becomes a past that will have been, then the present is the time of a holding to final account. The deflection of the present makes possible settler modernity’s continual reproduction through a variety of literal and figurative debt relations. It is a debt regime that functions in multiple ways. On the one hand, it is the debt to Indigenous communities that is unacknowledged. On the other hand, it provides the collateral for various debtor/creditor schemes. It is also, as I have elaborated, debt imperialism, or the debt that does not have to be repaid. Yet still, it continues to produce debt for various populations who are vulnerable to crushing indebtedness, or what Harvey calls “debt incumbency.”42 These seemingly antonymous forms of debt, or the deft ability of debt to operate as a sleight of hand, make crushingly clear how debt is not a strict economic relation. through the establishment of a military empire. The attendant temporal logic of this spatial dynamic, as Cooper writes, is a paradoxical time warp where the future and the past morph into each other without ever finding grounding in the present.41 If the unmade promise resides in an unacknowledged past, and the unkept promise can only be said to be that when the future itself becomes a past that will have been, then the present is the time of a holding to final account. 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#### The debt economy of US imperialism is maintained through necropolitics – the emancipation of the global south can never be permanent because those who are deemed as liberated as those are indefinitely indebted to the whims of logistical sovereignty

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This uneven distribution, or debt as governmentality, is what I call the necropolitics of the promise. The etymology of promise, from the Old French promesse, is a pledge, vow, guarantee, or assurance. From Latin, promissum is the noun use of the neuter past participle of promittere, which is to send forth, let go, foretell, or assure beforehand. Keeping in mind this temporal dimension of what a promise means and what it means to promise, I contend that the US abandonment of the gold standard has ushered in a fatal double standard. Even as the United States rolls over its debts indefinitely, it imposes structural adjustment policies, austerity measures, and foreclosures on other debtor countries and populations. Variously labeled Third World debtors, subprime borrowers, and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) of subSaharan Africa, these debtors are compelled to keep their promises, for failure to do so results in punishment and discipline. Some promises demand repayment more than others, and some must conform to the homogeneous time of repayment more than others. The debtor creditor relationship is not simply governed through the borrowing and lending of money but animated and enforced by an already existing asymmetry in power relations. As such, debt indexes not only the state and sum of money owed but also a broader social relation structured by violent disciplinary protocols compelling the indebted to conduct themselves in a manner that will maximize the likelihood of repayment. In this sense, to be indebted is not simply to owe money. It is to inhabit a subjectivity that robs one of the possibility of having multiple futures, multiple ways of conducting oneself and being in the world. This, then, is the relationship between debt and time: debt neutralizes time so that it conforms to the homogeneous time of repayment.43 Writing on the ascendance of neoliberalism and the debt economy since the 1970s, and following Nietzsche and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on debt, Maurizio Lazzarato observes, “The credit relation does not mobilize physical and intellectual abilities as labor does . . . but the morality of the debtor, his mode of existence (his ‘ethos’). The importance of the debt economy lies in the fact that it appropriates and exploits both chronological labor time and action, non-chronological time, time as choice, decision, a wager on what will happen and on the forces (trust, desire, courage, etc.) that make choice, decision, and action possible.”44 Indeed, whole nations and populations of the world have been saddled with permanent debt and cannot liberate themselves from the debt bind. They are subjected to what Gayatri Spivak calls “credit-baiting” and what Miranda Joseph has called a “pedagogy of ‘entrepreneurial’ subjectivity.”45 Indeed, we witness a role reversal in which the actual debtors have transmogrified into creditors, and vice versa. As Frantz Fanon writes, “Europe is the literal creation of the Third World.”46 That is, Europe and the United States owe a huge debt to the world that created them. Yet the afterlife of colonial plunder persists through the neocolonial policies, for example, of institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, whose officials Federici calls the conquistadors of today.47 David Graeber suggests that a debt is “just the perversion of a promise,” a promise “corrupted by both math and violence.”48 Yet for persons and places marked by a debt that, as Paula Chakravartty and Denise Ferreira da Silva write, “cannot be settled even with death,”49 debt is not simply a perversion of a promise. As I see it, debt in this instance is itself both a relation and an instrument of violence converted by the strange math of settler modernity and racial capitalism into a promissory note that binds for some but not for others. To promise, and to be promised, can mean radically different things depending on where the debtor, whether a nation or an individual, is located within asymmetries of power that are at once shifting and enduring. This asymmetrical relation is now triangulated by China, a newly emergent creditor building what journalist Howard French calls a “new empire” in Africa.50

#### Thus, I affirm bad debt of sanctions– the aff forwards a collective default on the global souths debt – the process of does not ask to forgive our debt but rather debt cannot be paid and that exists without a creditor

Kim, J. (2018). Settler modernity, debt imperialism, and the necropolitics of the promise. Social Text, 36(2), 41-61. Accessed 7-6-2024 CSUF JmB TDI

The creation of crushing indebtedness through the necropolitics of the promise, or debt as the foreclosure of freedom, futurity, and at times of life itself, enjoins us to ask how debt as both a literal and figurative economy also emerges as the effect of freedom, emancipation, or liberation. Saidiya Hartman writes that emancipation for the enslaved in the US instituted indebtedness via a calculus of blame and responsibility through which the newly freed were obliged to repay their emancipators’ “investment of faith” and demonstrate their worthiness. This figurative economy of indebtedness compelling submission and servitude was conjoined to a literal one in which Black laborers were rendered vulnerable to peonage and debt servitude. In this way, the transition from slavery to freedom, writes Hartman, constructed “an already accrued debt, abstinent present, and a mortgaged future. In short, to be free was to be a debtor that is, obliged and dutybound to others.”51 Yet what of debt when whole nations are also “liberated”? In this instance, gratitude is enfigured as indebtedness through the scripting of military intervention and imperial violence as a bestowal or gift of national liberation. If the literal financial economy of debt can be rewritten as a form of US imperial power, debt can also function as a figurative economy or narrative structure animating that power. The United States is able to leverage, convert, and narrate indebtedness into imperial might. Yet the structure of feeling imposed on those who are “liberated” from imperial or colonial domination is one of gratitude or indebtedness. Writing in the context of US imperialism in Asia, Lisa Yoneyama argues that the “imperialist myth of liberation and rehabilitation” confers belatedness and indebtedness.52 The newly liberated nation, a pre- or protodemocracy, experiences a belatedness visa vis political modernity. Yet it must demonstrate again and again an indebtedness to its imperial liberator for making the presumed eventual arrival at political modernity possible in the first place. But in the end, this moment of arrival never quite arrives, so the debt can never be fully repaid. I am compelled to ask, by way of a conclusion, how we might abolish the debt relation altogether. To be clear, this call for debt abolition is different from debt forgiveness. The latter only clears particular debts, whereas the former eliminates debt as such. Put differently, this is to ask about the difference between the abolishment of settler modernity and “forgiveness” industries and processes such as liberal philanthropy, truth and reconciliation commissions, reparations, and transitional justice. These latter processes are the symptoms of, the placeholders for, an as yet unrealized horizon. For the figurative debt, might it be possible to enact a politics that calls on us to view the debt not as an invitation to coevality or liberal political modernity that we cannot refuse, but as an engulfment into the suffocating embrace of imperial and gendered racial violence? For the literal debt, this politics calls on us to refuse the debt by harnessing the power of a collective default against the bullying threat of US debt imperialism. This is to embrace something along the lines of what Fred Moten and Stefano Harney call the place of bad debt, “the debt that cannot be repaid . . . the debt without creditor, the black debt, the queer debt, the criminal debt”54 and the student debt. This debt without creditor gestures to an alternative social relation and economy and refuses quid pro quo calculations of reciprocity. Indeed, if debt in an alternative sense is a lateral form of reciprocity and obligation, or the very thing that makes sociality possible, the debt regimes of liberal military empire and settler colonialism have converted and perverted that sociality into necropolitical social hierarchy. In this sense, to inquire into this conversion is to perform a social autopsy, to encounter the mortuary of the already dead and the living dead, all the while apprehending that what remains and awaits our embrace are those stubborn refusals.

#### The creation of credit in pursuit of debt is a process of individuation that indefinitely projects settler colonialism and racial slavery into the future. Possessive credit-debt relationships produce catastrophe by design. Neoliberal politics can only continue to function by rendering individuals and ecologies as fungible objects in service of the market. The 1AC’s planning is a method of survival in difference against individuation.

Moten and Kelley 17 (Fred, Professor of Performance Studies at New York University; Robin D.G., Professor of American History at the University of California, Los Angeles, “Robin D.G. Kelley & Fred Moten In Conversation,” transcribed from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP-2F9MXjRE 31:49-55:57)

MOTEN: Well, um, first, I mean, the work I did around, um, you know, the ASA’s, um, you know, decision to endorse the academic and cultural boycott of Israel was really minimal and minor compared to a lot of other people who were really out front, um, and, and have been working tirelessly for that for many, many years. Um, and I think, you know, the, my contribution was more, you know, rhetorical in many ways in, in, in, and, and maybe, maybe theoretical only in the most minimal sense, in the sense that what I wanted to do was a couple of things. First, to recognize that, um, you know, let's say that the conditions of what people call modernity, um, in, in, in, in, or global modernity, that the fundamental conditions that make that up are, you know, settler colonialism. And I think we can talk about settler colonialism in ways that are broader than the normal way that we usually think of them as a set of violent and brutal relations between Europe and the rest of the world. Because I think it's really important. And, and, and again, our, our mutual friend and mentor Cedric Robinson, pointed this out emphatically, and in brilliant ways early on, that settler colonialism is also an intra-European affair. Um, and it's important to understand that. It's important to understand this historic relationship between settler colonialism in the enclosure of the commons, um, which is part and, part of the origins of, of what we now know or understand as capitalism. But if we understand that settler colonialism, that the transatlantic slave trade, um, and that, you know, the emergence of a set of philosophical formulations that essentially provide for us some modern conception of self that has as its basis a kind of possessive, heteronormative, patriarchal individuation, right? That's what it is to be yourself on the most fundamental level. You know, and if you ask anybody in the philosophy department, they'll tell you that that's true, you know, and they won’t be joking, right, that, um, that, these, that these constitute the basis of, of our modernity. But for most of the people who live in the world, actually for everybody who lives in the world, although most of the people in live in the world are actually able to both recognize this and say this, that modernity is a social and ecological disaster that we live, that we now attempt to survive. Okay? And if we take that up, then part of what's at stake is that we recognize that feminist and queer interventions against heteronormative patriarchy, that Black interventions against the theory and practice of slavery, which is ongoing, that indigenous interventions against settler colonialism constitute the general both practical and intellectual basis for not only our attempts to survive, but also our attempts to, as I said before, save the Earth. And, and I put it in terms that the great poet Ed Roberson puts it; not just to save the Earth, but to see the Earth before the end of the world. And this is an emergency that we're in now and it's urgent. Um, and I believe that there’s a specific convergence of black thought and indigenous thought that situates itself precisely in relation to, and is articulated through, the interventions of queer thought and feminist thought that we want to take up. And, and it, and it strikes me as, for me at least, it's, it's a way of taking up a kind an—it's, it’s a way of imagining how one might be able to, how we might be able to walk more lightly on the Earth. To honor the Earth as we walk on it, as we stand on it. To not stomp on it, to not stomp all over it, where every step you take is a claim of ownership. And, and this is one way to put it, would be to not so presumptuously imagine that the Earth can be reduced to something so paltry and so viciously understood as what we usually call home. This is part of the reason why the queer and the feminist critique is so important. It's a critique of a general problematic notion of domesticity. It's like another way of being on the Earth that doesn't allow you in some vicious and brutal way to claim that it is yours, right? Um, this is important and this is so, you know, often the methods that we use to claim the Earth as ours involved fences, borders. This manifests itself on a private level from household to household, but it also manifests itself on a national level, and at the level of the nation state, and it's not an accident that settler colonial states take it upon themselves to imagine themselves to be the living embodiment of the legitimacy of the nation state as a political and social form. For me, there's two reasons to be in solidarity with the people of Palestine. One is because they're human beings and they're being treated with absolute brutality, but the other is that there's a specific resistance to Israel as a nation state. And for my money, to be perfectly clear about this, I believe that this nation state of Israel is itself an artifact of antisemitism. If we thought about Israel and Zionism, not just as a form of racism that results in the displacement of Palestinians, but if we also think about them as artifacts of the historic displacement of Jews from Europe, right, in the same way that we might think of, let's say Sierra Leone or Liberia as artifacts of racist displacement, okay. If we think about it that way, okay, and another, and the reason I'm saying this is just to make sure that you know that there's a possible argument against the formulation that criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic when we know that Donald Trump is a staunch supporter, that people like Pat Robertson in the United States are staunch supporters that help us to the fact that you can be deeply anti-Semitic and support the state of Israel. These things go together. They're not antithetical to one another. So that it becomes important for us to be able to suggest that resistance to the state of Israel is also resistance to the idea of the legitimacy of the nation state. It's not an accident that Israel has taken upon itself, that when Israel takes upon itself, when the defense of Israel manifests itself as a defense of its right to exist, this is important. It's a defense, not just of Israel's right to exist, but of the nation state as a political form’s right to exist. And nation states don't have rights. What they're supposed to be are mechanisms to protect the rights of the people who live in them, and that has almost never been the case, and to the extent that they do protect the rights of the people who live in them, it's in the expense, it's at the expense of the people who don't, okay. So part of what's at stake, one of the reasons why it's at, it's important to pay particular attention to this issue, why we ought to resist the ridiculous formulation that singling out Israel at this moment is itself anti-Semitic is because it's important to recognize that Israel is the state.

#### Policy approaches to debt forgiveness are incompatible with a gesture towards mutual indebtedness. Logistics manifests as the driving force of militarized US imperialism – international relations are forged, un-made, and remade as a product of toxic debt. Debt forgiveness is the renewal of precarity through new obligations. The attempted imposition of precarity and credit, however, gestures to a fugitive public where debt accumulates without credit through study and planning amongst bad debtors, an alternative approach to debate and the resolution in excess of policy’s attempt at regulation.

Moten, F., & Harney, S. (2010). Debt and study. E-flux Journal, 14, 1. Accessed 7/6/2024 CSUF JmB TDI

They say we have too much debt. We need better credit, more credit, less spending. They offer us credit repair, credit counseling, microcredit, personal financial planning. They promise to match credit and debt again, debt and credit. But our debts stay bad. We keep buying another song, another round. It is not credit that we seek, nor even debt, but bad debt – which is to say real debt, the debt that cannot be repaid, the debt at a distance, the debt without creditor, the black debt, the queer debt, the criminal debt. Excessive debt, incalculable debt, debt for no reason, debt broken from credit, debt as its own principle Credit is a means of privatization and debt a means of socialization. So long as debt and credit are paired in the monogamous violence of the home, the pension, the government, or the university, debt can only feed credit, debt can only desire credit. And credit can only expand by means of debt. But debt is social and credit is asocial. Debt is mutual. Credit runs only one way. Debt runs in every direction, scattering, escaping, seeking refuge. The debtor seeks refuge among other debtors, acquires debt from them, offers debt to them. The place of refuge is the place to which you can only owe more, because there is no creditor, no payment possible. This refuge, this place of bad debt, is what we would call the fugitive public. Running through the public and the private, the state and the economy, the fugitive public can be identified by its bad debt – but only by its debtors. To creditors, it is just a place where something is wrong, though that something – the invaluable thing that has no value – is desired. Creditors seek to demolish that place, that project, in order to save those who live there from themselves and from their lives. They research it, gather information on it, try to calculate it. They want to save it. They want to break its concentration and store the fragments in the bank. All of a sudden, the thing credit cannot know – the fugitive thing for which it gets no credit – is inescapable. Once you start to see bad debt, you start to see it everywhere, hear it everywhere, feel it everywhere. This is the real crisis for credit, its real crisis of accumulation. Now debt begins to accumulate without it. That’s what makes it so bad. We saw it yesterday in the way someone stepped, in the hips, a smile, the way the hand moved. We heard it in a break, a cut, a lilt, the way the words leapt. We felt it in the way someone saves the best part just for you, and then it’s gone, given, a debt. They don’t want nothing. You got to accept it, you got to accept that. You’re in debt but you can’t give credit because they won’t hold it. Then the phone rings. It’s the creditors. Credit keeps track. Debt forgets. You’re not home, you’re not you, you moved without leaving a forwarding address called refuge. The student is not home, out of time, out of place, without credit, in bad debt. The student is a bad debtor threatened with credit. The student runs from credit. Credit pursues the student, offering to match credit for debt until enough debts and enough credits have piled up. But the student has a habit, a bad habit. She studies. She studies but she does not learn. If she learned, they could measure her progress, confirm her attributes, give her credit. But the student keeps studying, keeps planning to study, keeps running to study, keeps studying a plan, keeps building a debt. The student does not intend to pay. Debt cannot be forgiven, it can only be forgotten and remembered. To forgive debt is to restore credit. It is restorative justice. Debt can be abandoned for bad debt, it can be forgotten, but it cannot be forgiven. Only creditors can forgive, and only debtors, bad debtors, can offer justice. Creditors forgive debt by offering credit, by offering more from the very source of the pain of debt, a pain for which there is only one source of justice: bad debt, forgetting, remembering again, remembering it cannot be paid, cannot be credited, stamped “received.” There will be a celebration when the North spends its own money and is left with nothing, and spends again, on credit, on stolen cards, on account of a friend who knows he will never again see what he lent. There will be a celebration when the Global South does not get credit for discounted contributions to world civilization and commerce, but keeps its debts, changes them only for the debts of others, a swap between those who never intend to pay, who will never be allowed to pay, in a bar in Penang, in Port of Spain, in Bandung, where your credit is no good. Credit can be restored, restructured, rehabilitated, but debt forgiven is always unjust, always unforgiven. Restored credit is restored justice and restorative justice is always the renewed reign of credit, a reign of terror, a hail of obligations to be met, measured, dispensed, endured. Justice is only possible where debt never obliges, never demands, never equals credit, payment, payback. Justice is possible only where it is never expected, in the refuge of bad debt, in the fugitive public of strangers and not of communities, of undercommons and not neighborhoods, among those who have been there all along from somewhere. To seek justice through restoration is to return debt to the balance sheet and the balance sheet never balances. It plunges toward risk, volatility, uncertainty, more credit chasing more debt, more debt shackled to more credit. To restore is to not conserve again. There is no refuge in restoration. Conservation is always new. It comes from the place we stopped on the run. It’s made from the people who took us in. It’s the space they say is wrong, the practice they say needs fixing, the homeless aneconomics of visiting. Communities do not need to be restored. They need to be conserved, which is to say they need to be moved, hidden, restarted with the same joke, the same story, always somewhere other than where the long arm of the creditor seeks them – conserved from restoration, beyond justice, beyond law, in bad country, in bad debt. Communities are planned when they are least expected, planned when they don’t follow the process, when they escape policy, evade governance, forget themselves, remember themselves, have no need of forgiveness. They are never wrong. They are not actually communities, but debtors at a distance – bad debtors, forgotten but never forgiven. Give credit where credit is due, and render unto bad debtors only debt, only that mutuality that tells you what you can’t do. You can’t pay me back, give me credit, get free of me, and I can’t let you go when you’re gone. If you want to do something, then forget this debt, and remember it later. Debt at a distance is forgotten, and remembered again. Think of autonomia, its debt at a distance to the black radical tradition. In autonomia, in the militancy of post-workerism, there is no outside, refusal takes place inside and makes its break, its flight, its exodus from the inside. There is biopolitical production and there is empire. There is even what Franco “Bifo” Berardi calls “soul trouble.” In other words, there is this debt at a distance to a global politics of blackness emerging out of slavery and colonialism, a black radical politics, a politics of debt without payment, without credit, without limit. This debt was built in a struggle with empire before empire, when power was not held by institutions or governments alone, where any owner or colonizer had the violent power of a ubiquitous state. This debt attached to those who, through dumb insolence or nocturnal planning, ran away without leaving, left without getting out. This debt was shared with anyone whose soul was sought for labor power, whose spirit was born marked with a price. And it is still shared, never credited and never abiding credit, a debt you play, a debt you walk, a debt you love. And without credit, this debt is infinitely complex. It does not resolve into profit, seized assets, or a balance in payment. The black radical tradition is a movement that works through this debt. The black radical tradition is debt work. It works in the bad debt of those in bad debt. It works intimately and at a distance until autonomia, for instance, remembers, and then forgets. The black radical tradition is debt unconsolidated.

#### The 1AC’s planning creates modes of sociality through togetherness in brokenness under the seemingly in-escapable logistics of empire and alliances structured around militarized debt. The separation of politics from its neoliberal center – refusing the demand towards productivity, moral payment of our obligation to the resolution, to procedural limits, or static interpretations of community norms is a moment of sociality that organizes to survive a world of indifference

Chakravartty & Da Silva, ’12 (Paula, associate professor at the Gallatin School and the Department of Media, Culture and Communication, and Denise Ferreira, Professor and Director of the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice at the University of British Columbia, “Accumulation, Dispossession, and Debt: The Racial Logic of Global Capitalism—An Introduction,” American Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3, September 2012, pp. 361-385)

Let us close with two provocations by way of the question that now more than ever hovers over our work intellectual and political: What is to be done? In her presidential address to the American Studies Association in 2011, Ruth Wilson Gilmore made a passionate plea to better understand—and to formulate a plan of action for dissolving—the relationship between race, economy, and empire, not simply as an academic exercise but as a political act essential in an age of growing militarization and inequality.45 Her picture of the neoliberal drawing board highlights three sites: namely, "structure adjustments," "security enhancement," and "the anti-state state." For Gilmore the first task before those of us who find this drawing deeply violent—those of us who attend to and respond to the fact that it both deploys and reproduces the arsenal of racial/knowledge power, which renders so many, as she puts it, vulnerable to "premature death"—is to organize. "Policy," she teases, "is to politics what method is to research."46 Policy and politics have framed this special issue because the papers collected here, as they engage the state-market axis, or the political and economic moments of violence, deploy conceptual, analytic, and methodological tools that signal the relevance of both. These conversations and debates about the subprime crisis demonstrate the point highlighted in the first part of this introduction, that debt allows morality to encompass the relationship, thus foreshadowing how Dana's relationship with her master is also fundamentally political in character. Any program that takes up Gilmore's challenge would have to begin by undoing the separation between the ethical and the political at the core of liberal (and neoliberal) thinking. This would release us from the burden of representation, to dissipate what David Lloyd describes in his discussion of "what is to be done," after Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?": "Discussion of the essay seems to lead inevitably to a sense of ontological consternation, in that it gets read over and again as posing to the reader not merely the pragmatic question as to 'what is to be done?' in relation to the subaltern, but the question, 'by what right are you here assuming any relation to the subaltern?"'47 Because the violence of racial and colonial subjugation works so effectively at the level of representation, we need to refuse "ethical consternation" and recuperate the relationship as a descriptor of difference, and not commonality.48 This also allows us to avoid the equally paralyzing and more common obverse effect of "ethical oblivion": "We have no relation to the subaltern, so why should we care?"49 More importantly, moments and movements of resistance might be better understood by methods heeding Avery Gordon's call to engage the ghosts or Fred Moten's invitation to ask what subprime debtors might teach us, offering a wholly distinct ethical program, as suggested by Nahum Chandler.50 In a book published a year before the transformative events of the Arab Spring, Asef Bayat wrote of "the non-movement of the urban dispossessed" in the Middle East: "the collective actions of non-collective actors . . . that have come to represent the mobilizations of millions of the subaltern, chiefly the urban poor, Muslim women, and youth." Bayat's description of how the "quiet encroachment of the ordinary" impinging on the propertied and the powerful through the "unlawful acquisitions of land and shelter" resonate with everyday forms of resistance across much of the global South after three long decades of neoliberal reform. Bayat, among other observers of Middle Eastern history and politics, has argued that it was the "middle class poor"—educated but unemployed and "subsisting at the margins of the neoliberal economy"— who sparked the events in Tunisia and Egypt and who would inspire a new global politics of protest in 2011.51 A nonmovement movement sparked by the indignation of Arab "street vendors, sales-persons, boss-boys, or taxi drivers" found unity in the ousting of U.S.-backed autocratic leaders like Hosni Mubarak.52 While it is beyond the scope of this introduction to delve into a meaningful discussion of the lessons from the (ongoing) uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa, this detour is meant simply to signal the need to better understand the logic of solidarities forged out of difference. Similarly, those in the global North who celebrate the resurgence of a universalist oppositional politics with audible sighs of relief that the "era of identity politics is behind us" might be reminded by the essays in this collection that neoliberal dispossession and debt are not lived in the same way by everyone.53 Recognizing the significant political success of the OWS movement in shifting the debate on the economy away from the populist Tea Party narratives, Rinku Sen of the Applied Research Center called for organizing "that challenges segregation, not only that of the 1% from everyone else, but also that which divides the 99% from within."54 This cannot simply be accomplished, as some researchers have suggested, with "occupiers reaching out to working class people and people of color" engendering "trust and solidarity" by "occupying the hood and barrio."55 Once again, as many of the essays in this collection remind us, this paternalistic approach—because it begins from the assumption of the absence of a relationship—to the targeting of "othered" populations can hardly bring about radical social or global justice. The crises of neoliberalism at the heart of empire and the vast oppositional energies it has mobilized make Gilmore's provocation for a politics of organization based on an alternative ethic and for a method that will take us beyond structures of racial/postcolonial subjugation all the more pressing. For as indicated by the essays in this issue, these politics and policies would assume a negative answer to the question: Why should economically dispossessed Blacks and Latino/as pay for those who bet on and profited from their inability to pay the unpayable debts? In each of the financial crises discussed in this issue, we find that the blame has been placed on persons and places that, like Dana, have been produced by racial power/knowledge as marked by mental traits that render them unable to inhabit the economic, legal, and moral positions unique to the modern subject. An alternative ethics, the essays in this issue suggest, would have to necessarily focus on the very relationship and capacity arrested and denied by the tools of raciality—in particular by racial and cultural difference. From there, politics that acknowledges temporal and spatial differences, historical and geographic specificities could emerge, without "oblivion" or "consternation," while recognizing the unpayability of such debt. Without such attention to the productive yet violent effects of raciality, and the kind of comprehension of social and global difference it enables, it will be difficult to realize the kinds of solidarities necessary to sustain the organizing that Ruth Wilson Gilmore reminds us oppositional movements cannot do without.

### Fugitive Publics

#### Welcome to the latest project of the United States imperialism – a new type of imperialism a process of economic warfare where the United States uses their economic might on the global south as an invisible war one that is meant to sustain the empire of the US – the United States sanction regime is structured through its debt regime but rather than owed debt, they force sanctioned countries into a debt regime where they are at the whims of the West

Lira, M. (2023). American Imperialism and Sanctions (Master's thesis, San Diego State University). Accessed 7/8/2024 CSUF JmB TDI

Although the United States utilized sanctions throughout the Cold War, the bulk of the sanctions were aimed at the Soviet Union and its allies, their success severely limited by the fact that they were not heavily reliant on American products or services (Becker, 1987). Even when the United States targeted non-Soviet allies, these sanctions were also constrained since target states could turn to the alternative superpower for support (Damrosch, 1994). Thus, in addition to creating the conditions for the resurgence of American capitalism in the 1990s, at a more minute level, the Soviet Union’s collapse also made sanctions infinitely more effective and attractive to American officials. Commonly regarded as an alternative to war, it is more accurate to view sanctions as another form of war. As argued earlier, imperialism manifests in multiple ways, from ostensibly benign activity like diplomacy and trade deals to overtly hostile activity like military intervention and conventional warfare. Sanctions thus represent another way to wage war, sometimes in conjunction with the overtly hostile methods, other times by themselves. The rise of American or American-led interventions in the 1990s is plain: Operation Desert Storm in 1991, Operation Uphold Democracy in 1994, Operation Just Cause from 1989 to 1990, Operation Restore Hope in 1992, Operation Joint Endeavor in 1995, and Operation Noble Anvil in 1999 (Bacevich, 2016; Gibbs, 2009; Girard, 2002; Kapteijns, 2013; Sanchez, 2002). Less obvious, however, are the ways in which sanctions aided these war efforts. Iraq is perhaps the most well-documented case of both sanctions and military intervention by the United States. Operation Desert Storm was more complicated than the United States and its allies simply standing up for Kuwait and the principle of state sovereignty (something the previous invasion of Panama and the future interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo would show). Other more important reasons for the defense of Kuwait included, (1) the threat of Iraq controlling Kuwait’s oil fields and perhaps even Saudi Arabia’s oil fields, which would have put 20 percent of the world’s oil under the control of an unreliable and possibly hostile state (Collins, 2019), (2) Saddam Hussein’s declining utility once he had fulfilled his primary duty of containing Iran (O’Reilly, 2008, p. 168), (3) the long-held American goal of establishing a permanent military presence in the Middle East (Johnson, 2004, p. 33), and (4) the United States’ strategic goal of controlling the flow of oil in the region (Callinicos, 2009, p. 224). In Iraq, UN and US sanctions played an invaluable role, first in establishing an embargo which weakened the Hussein government (Alnasrawi, 2001) and then most importantly, ensuring Iraq remained a docile power in the Middle East and abided by the interests of the United States and its allies after the Gulf War (Nakhaei, 2022). The international sanctions on Iraq caused enormous hardship for its civilians. The 661 committee, a governing body created by the UN to monitor and approve humanitarian exceptions to the economic embargo, proved to be wholly inadequate. The 661 committee regularly denied or delayed Iraq’s requests for food and consumer goods, despite the country’s chronic food shortages throughout the 1990s. Arguing that imports could be used to rebuild Iraqi industry (something expressly forbidden by the United States) and/or aid the military, the 661 committee regularly denied goods such as aluminum cans for food packaging, salt, powdered milk, raw cotton, sewing thread, and at one point, infant’s milk (Gordon, 2012, pp. 54-63). Under its ‘dual use’ philosophy, the 661 committee even denied computer equipment for hospitals and schools, medical textbooks, equipment for teaching science at the secondary and university levels, fertilizer and pesticides for food production, and animal vaccines necessary for raising cattle (Gordon, 2020). Iraq’s foreign reserves were also frozen throughout the 1990s, as was its ability to export oil, its main source of revenue. This led to hyperinflation, mass unemployment, and the government’s inability to fund public services like water sanitization, electricity, and its health care system, eventually leading to the outbreak of epidemics like malaria and typhoid (Nakhaei, 2022). Jeremy Scahill, a journalist based in Iraq during the 1990s, reported, “Every pediatric hospital felt like a death row for infants,” and major hospitals, “reeked of gasoline,” because doctors used it as a desperate substitute for sterilizers, disinfectant, and bleach (as cited in Batinga, 2022). As Gordon (2012) argues, the death and destruction caused by the sanctions were not unintended consequences, they were widely known ramifications that, in the eyes of American officials, were justifiable for the greater good, namely the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. As former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright infamously responded, when asked if the 500,000 dead Iraqi children were worth the cost of the sanctions in 1996, “I think this is a very hard choice, but the price- we think the price is worth it,” (Mahajan, 2001). Another well-documented case in the 1990s is the breakup of Yugoslavia, facilitated by NATO intervention and UN and US sanctions (Babić & Jokić, 2010). The Bosnia and Kosovo interventions served two main goals for the United States: (1) maintain the American military presence in Europe, especially in view of the heightened imperial competition, and (2) secure the conditions for privatization in Central and Eastern Europe (Gowan, 1999, pp. 305, 293-294). As mentioned earlier, NATO was established during the Cold War as a military alliance to ostensibly protect Western Europe from Soviet interference. After the Soviet Union fell, there were serious questions as to whether NATO needed to continue. Thus, for the United States, reconfiguring NATO as an organization to protect Europe from any threat became a top priority (Gibbs, 2009, pp. 30-33). The continuation of NATO ensured American influence in the affairs of European security and also served as a way to contain other imperialist states, especially newly unified Germany (Gowan, 1999, pp. 304- 305). Secondly, post-communist Eastern and Central Europe represented huge economic opportunities for a diverse set of American sectors, ranging from finance to manufacturing all the way to weapons manufacturers. The interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo thus served as an important interjector to ensure Yugoslavia developed along capitalist lines that benefited the United States (North, 2016, pp. 382-384). Sanctions aided these efforts in various ways. In 1992, after only Serbia and Montenegro remained part of Yugoslavia, the UNSC passed resolution 757 which suspended Yugoslavia’s access to the international financial system and imposed an embargo, banning all trade in and out Yugoslavia except for food and medicine (Elich, 2021). Additionally, the United States blocked the Yugoslav government from accessing any of its property or significant financial assets held in the United States or at any American overseas financial branches (Lewis, 1992). These efforts crippled Yugoslav industry, limited medical supplies, prompted runaway inflation that topped 1000 percent, and created enormous hardship for the people of Yugoslavia by making food staples, cooking oil, gasoline, and household goods scarcer and more expensive (Arya, 2008; Elich, 2021). At the time, one Yugoslav diplomat remarked, “The United States wants Yugoslavia within the framework of the new international order, not outside it, and certainly not opposed to it. It has been saying this both publicly and in conversation” (Elich, 2021). Elsewhere, Haiti and Panama also experienced the combined effort of sanctions and military intervention. In Haiti, the United States, the Organization of American States, and the UN began a series of comprehensive sanctions under the seemingly noble goal of restoring democracy and returning the previously deposed Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the first democratically elected president in Haiti, back to power. Though the United States was originally involved in the coup d’état that ousted Aristide, he was still tremendously popular in the country (Engelberg, 1994). After Aristide agreed to liberalize the economy upon his arrival, the United States and the UN initiated a comprehensive sanction regime, and later military intervention, to return the newly US-friendly Aristide back to power (Saccarelli & Varadarajan, 2015, pp. 180-181), in the process creating mass unemployment, major gasoline and electricity shortages, and an exodus of people fleeing hunger, poverty, and crime in the capital (Gibbons & Garfield, 1999). In Panama, the United States claimed that its years of sanctions, resulting in Panama’s inability to access over $375 million of its assets and severe difficulty with exporting its commodities (Pine, 1989), were intended to overthrow its leader, Manuel Noriega, a notorious figure in the illicit drug trafficking industry (Glass, 2018). After years of deprivation failed to topple the Noriega government, the United States invaded Panama in 1989-90 to safeguard its geopolitical and economic interests in the Panama Canal that were being threatened by Noriega, a once-valuable CIA asset who had now outlived his utility as the Cold War came to a close (Sanchez, 2002). As these few examples show, the revanchist nature of the United States in the 1990s very heavily relied on the combination of sanctions and military intervention. The primary significance of sanctions, however, during and since the ‘sanction decade’, lay their ability to wage what Gordon (2012) calls ‘invisible war.’ Sanctions, as shown in the previous chapter, are widely perceived as humane, or at least sufficiently humane. The importance of these seemingly benign tools of statecraft can be seen in the context of what Moyn (2021) refers to as the shift towards ‘humane war,’ referring to the general sanitization of war through modern military reforms like the abandonment of large-scale aerial bombardments in favor of ‘precision’ drone strike and the transition from ground invasions to the use of special forces. To be sure, this sanitization is purely one sided; the American public is spared from reading about the horrors of conventional warfare (Robinson, 2018), but the death and destruction continues, even under these newly sanitized methods (David & Ness, 2022). In this regard, sanctions represent an incredibly important weapon for the United States since it can wage ‘invisible war’ and advance the interests of American capital, all while masking the violent nature of imperialism. Another method of waging invisible war is through the utilization of the opaque global financial system. Given the powerful role of the United States in the global economy and its influence on the institutions that govern it, sanctions represent a potent tool to enforce or advance the interests of the United States, without needing to resort to overtly hostile tactics. Specifically, the waning but still dominant position of the US Dollar and the American financial sector’s clout in international trade and banking allows the United States to implement sanctions with relative ease and force the compliance of other states. As the next chapter will show, US sanctions can directly or indirectly prevent sanctioned states from trading and/or utilizing the US dollar and its financial institutions - a major factor, since the US Dollar remains the base currency of global trade. On the significance of the US Dollar, Norfield (2015) argues, “given the fact that most world trade and finance is denominated in dollars, the US can be seen as the provider of ‘global money’, able to decide which policies to pursue based upon its domestic interests and on what it deems viable for the global economic and monetary system,” (p. 168). Indeed, since the most important global commodities like oil, natural gas, metals, food products, pharmaceuticals, and beverage products (coffee and tea) are priced and sold in US Dollars, it is incredibly difficult for states to avoid using and requiring access to the Dollar (Chen et al., 2014). Even if states seek to bypass US sanctions by not using the US Dollar and instead use their own national currencies, it remains exceedingly difficult to use smaller, less valuable currencies in a global financial system that prioritizes the Dollar and, in most cases, has some connection to American financial institutions (Norfield, 2015, p. 169). Through the pervasive reach of American finance capital and direct government institutions like the Federal Reserve Bank, also known as known as the ‘world’s central bank,’ “widespread use of the dollar means that most trade and financial flows are settled through plumbing controlled by either the US state or entities regulated by the US state” (Schwartz, 2020). This puts the United States in an incredibly strategic position to offer, temporarily withhold, or bar states from accessing the US Dollar and its financial institutions that remain paramount for participation in the global capitalist system. Of course, the United States is not the only imperialist state to use monetary policy to enable exploitative relationships; a good example is France’s ‘Franc zone,’ a monetary system that binds 15 former colonies in Africa to the French Treasury through the use of a common currency. The Franc zone, Pigeaud and Sylla (2020) succinctly argue, is a, “neocolonial system of domination that the French state established on the eve of the independence of the former colonies, with the precise aim of preserving the advantages of the colonial pact,” (pp. 3-4). The privileged position of the US dollar, however, extends to the entire globe, and though the power of the dollar is diminishing (Plender, 2021), it still allows the United States to utilize sanctions more effectively than any other state. Lastly, another important factor that makes sanctions a distinctly powerful tool for the United States is its influence on the mechanisms that enable the flow of finance across the globe. Service providers Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT), Fedwire, and Clearing House Interbank Payments System (CHIPS), though operating at different scales and offering different services, all facilitate transaction between banks around the world that amount to trillion of dollars per day moved, essentially, “greasing the wheels of global capitalism” (Pantich & Gindin, 2012, p. 95; U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2006). Belgium-based SWIFT is by far the largest facilitator of financial transactions and payments in the world. It connects over 11,000 banks in 200 countries and is overseen by the 10 largest central banks in the world as well as the major private banks like Citibank and JPMorgan Chase (Zarate, 2013, pp. 49-50). Fedwire and CHIPS are based in the United States. Fedwire connects over 7,000 banks and is under the formal control of the Federal Reserve system, while CHIPS is run by private banks and connects 46 of the largest banks in the world (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2006). SWIFT, Fedwire, and CHIPS thus process virtually all international financial transactions and are subject to US jurisdiction, directly in the case of Fedwire and CHIPS, or de facto in the case of SWIFT (Hutman et al., 2022). This incredible power and sway in the apparatuses that govern international finance means the United States has the ability to block or greatly limit a state’s ability to carry out basic financial transactions needed to survive via primary sanctions, or in the case of secondary sanctions, compel third-party states into conforming to its objectives out of fear of economic and political ostracization (Ruys & Ryngaert, 2020). Keeping in mind that modern capitalism is heavily dependent on finance, the headquarters of which are concentrated in New York City and London, and access to credit, loans, bonds., most states will be forced to comply with American sanctions, unless they have a large enough economy to internally produce necessary goods and or withstand the consequences of defiance (Raval et al., 2019).

#### The process of empire is built off of the debt and credit relationship – the logic of the empire allows the US to be the worlds greatest debtor one that seeks colonial conquest across the globe – the resolution is a attempt to reconceptualize debt that must be repaid to the empire

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Since the midnineteenth century, national debt has played a vital role in the predatory practice of the nexus of capital and the settler state. The “enchanter’s wand” through which the national debt begets speculative capital has more recently been endowed with an even greater magic. The Fourteenth Amendment recognizes and validates the public debt, and recent debates about the “debt ceiling” attempted to make urgent the question of the US government’s ability to pay back its loans. Still, the United States is the greatest debtor nation in the world, and thus far its debt has been rolled over indefinitely.23 This is the story of how the United States rigged the game of world finance in 1971. It is the story of debt as imperialism, or what economist Michael Hudson calls superimperialism.24 The United States exercises debt imperialism by virtue of, and not despite of, its status as the greatest debtor in the world. How has the United States been able to convert indebtedness, a position of weakness, into a position of relative strength and, indeed, into the very basis of the world’s monetary and financial system?25 Significant elements in the cruel magic of this alchemy are gold and paper. In 1971, Nixon floated the dollar, depegging it from the gold standard. Since then, the United States has become the world’s greatest debtor and has reached a level of indebtedness without world-historical precedent. The United States replaced the gold standard with a transformed US Treasury Bill, a government-issued debt, as an international monetary standard. Essentially, what this has meant since the early 1970s is that foreign banks with a surplus of dollars can no longer exchange them for gold. Rather, the banks must purchase US Treasury Bonds, meaning US Treasury debt, thereby extending a continuous loan to the United States. This, counterintuitively, is an important source of US imperial power, an effective debt imperialism through which the US keeps itself afloat by inflating its capital markets and generating growing levels of budget deficits via foreign capital investment. It is a debt apparently without ceiling, precisely because the loan that the world continues to extend to the United States has become an integral, structural feature of the world economy. That is, US hegemony is significantly leveraged via a debt that is rolled over indefinitely and does not have to be repaid. How can a global superpower also be a global superdebtor? As Giovanni Arrighi and others have asked, how, in other words, can the United States have hegemony without hegemoney?26 Given the central role of US global finance in the world economy, a US default on its massive debt would radically destabilize the architecture of racial capitalism. The specter of such a destabilization and attendant fears of apocalyptic risk are in effect exploited as a form of US imperial domination. Put simply, the US nationstate is too big to fail. As such, one significant feature of US settler modernity is debt imperialism, or the creation of a temporal exception through which the United States is able to roll over its debt indefinitely. The United States does not need to conform to the homogeneous time of repayment even as it imposes that standard temporality on other populations and nations, and even as those who have been subjected to US military and imperial intervention are structurally positioned within a financial and affective economy of an indebtedness that is perpetual. The threat or actual use of institutional violence (via, for example, effective unilateral veto power in formally multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) and the threat of military retaliation compel the world to submit to the rigged rules of the game. This is a kind of metapolitical authority, or the authority not only to apply or enforce laws, as well as discipline and punish when necessary, but also to define the very contours of what constitutes law and political authority as such. US debt imperialism is the economic logic and form of US militarism and military empire, one that is heavily concentrated, as I have observed, in Asia and the Pacific. This loan that the world is continually compelled to extend to the United States is in many ways a form of tribute or, more accurately, a protection racket in recent decades. Debt imperialism is at once the literal cost and effect of military empire. US debt has been significantly incurred via military spending, and it is no coincidence that the United States has a strong military presence in its creditor nations, like Germany, Japan, and South Korea. In fiscal years 2016 and 2017, the US military budget was projected to be close to $600 billion annually, accounting for over 50 percent of all federal discretionary spending. And in March 2017, President Trump requested a 10 percent increase for 2018.27 As Melinda Cooper so aptly puts it, “The irony here is that the exorbitant military expenditure of the United States has been financed through the very debt imperialism it is designed to enforce!”28 It is no wonder, then, that US debt imperialism has been described as the “greatest rip-off ever achieved.”29 Thus far, even the entrance of China and China’s status as the greatest US creditor have not witnessed a radical destabilization of US debt imperialism, even as this has disrupted the longstanding US fantasy since the latter half of the nineteenth century about gaining access to China’s fabled market. US military empire has been called an empire of bases, proliferated globally, especially in Asia and the Pacific, during and after World War II, the Cold War, on through the more recent War on Terror, and now as part of the new twenty first century Asia Pacific pivot. Yet if we consider, again, the very founding of the United States, we would recall that the young nation’s ever westward expansion during the nineteenth century depended on the stationing of soldiers in more than 250 military forts. The establishment of an overseas empire beginning with the 1898 Spanish American War also depended on the expansion of overseas bases. During World War II, “island hopping” across the Pacific (through Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and Okinawa) for the bombing of Japan witnessed an expansion of US bases, as did the inheritance of the British basing structure. By 1945, over 44 percent of all US military facilities overseas were located in the Pacific, with the extensive global network stretching from the Arctic Circle to Antarctica.30 And although the more than 2,000 overseas installations during World War II had dwindled to 582 by 1949, as the Cold War escalated, especially in Korea, the number by 1957 had risen to 815, and yet higher to 1,104 by the peak of the Vietnam War. Two- thirds of these bases were in South Korea, Japan and Okinawa, and West Germany, and they continue to be located there as of the release of the 2009 Base Structure Report of the US Department of Defense.31 Notably, before US forces withdrew in 1992, the former US colony of the Philippines hosted one of the most significant and vast US military complexes in the world, employing seventy thousand Filipinos and thirteen thousand US military personnel. Clark Field became the second largest US airbase on the planet, and Subic Bay became the largest American naval facility outside the United States.32 In terms of land, the US military controls 29 million acres of territory, with approximately 635,000 acres of that located overseas and made available by host governments. In terms of cost and value, military installations within the continental United States are worth more than $600 billion, and overseas installations more than $124 billion. Crucially, these figures do not include recent base buildups in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, nor do they include the value of the twenty-three thousand buildings, structures, and installations leased by the United States in Asia and Europe. The United States, in other words, is not only the biggest military power in the world but also the world’s biggest landlord and leaseholder.33 The public debt of settler colonialism has thus been linked with a more specific debt driven by military spending in the post–World War II conjuncture. Settler colonialism is at once military empire’s proving ground, obscured condition of possibility, and imbricated partner in violence. Settler colonialism conditions and makes possible debt imperialism. Scott Morgensen makes the important observation that the biopolitics of settler colonialism and the displacement of Native peoples and nations “form a transnational proving ground within settler societies to produce a white settler state for imperial projection abroad.”34 In the case of the United States, the territoriality of settler colonial and imperial projections of power include not only the fifty states (or incorporated territories) but also a variety of unincorporated and discontiguous territories. In the Pacific, these are the unincorporated territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the three Compact of Free Association nations of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. If debt imperialism is the promise that does not require keeping, this proving ground, or stolen land, or fatally irradiated territory in the case of the Marshall Islands, is the promise that does not have to be made at all. As I have written elsewhere, to speak of the militarization that produced and continues to reproduce the United States as a white settler state and military empire is to speak of a way of life.35 Militarization exceeds the temporal parameters of war, the spatial demarcations of military bases, the functional ends of military institutions, and the enlistment of military personnel. Militarization, in other words, is all of these things, yet more. Eisenhower’s warning in his 1961 farewell address about the dangers of a “military-industrial complex” acquiring unwarranted power turns out to have been prescient and necessary, but ultimately unheeded. Today, a constellation of phenomena, historical processes, and subjectivities can be properly characterized, and need to be urgently critiqued, as militarized. These include militarized humanitarianism, militarized diaspora, militarized adoption, militarized prostitution, militarized kinship, militarized capitalism, and militarized settler colonialism.36 What does it mean that the term militarized serves as a correct adjective, appearing in a host of modifiernoun couplings that at first seem oxymoronic or unlikely but upon closer critical examination are compatible, coconstitutive, and verging on the tautological? In their important anthology Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and the Pacific, Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho analyze militarization “as an extension of colonialism and its gendered and racialized processes,” interrogating how “colonial histories constitute the conditions of possibility for ongoing forms of militarization.”37 Invasion and annexation of Hawai‘i, territorial acquisition of Guam, genocidal colonial conquest of the Philippines, occupation of Japan and Okinawa, wars in Korea and Vietnam these have been some of the militarized US campaigns in Asia and the Pacific spanning over a century thus far. Asian and Pacific migration to the United States has been significantly constituted by this protracted history of militarized intervention, especially its Cold War phase. As Cynthia Enloe observed, the Pacific Rim is strung together with a necklace of US military bases, violently producing a “militarized inter connectedness.”38 This necessitates intellectual, political, and cultural projects that can take that interconnectedness into critical account while being attentive to local specificities, differences, and hierarchies. To name just a few examples, the history of Japanese empire and militarism in Asia and the Pacific, Asian settler colonialism in Hawai‘i, and specific developments such as the May 2012 USJapan agreement to withdraw nine thousand US troops from Okinawa and transfer them to Guam, Hawai‘i, and Australia challenge assumptions of a coherent or homogeneous “Pacific Rim” or “AsiaPacific.” Yet to the extent that Asia and the Pacific have been and continue to be strategic sites and staging grounds of US settler modernity, or the locus of a militarized interconnectedness, they and their futures are enchained. While we can use the terms militarization and militarism interchangeably, we might also think of militarization as the process that both contributes to and is the effect of militarism. Next, militarism, in turn, indexes something much more pervasive than the collusion between the military and the arms industry named by Eisenhower’s military industrial complex. We might conceptualize instead “regimes of militarism” as the colonial and neocolonial nexus of state and capital that generates a proliferation of military logics beyond formal military institutions and sites, and beyond the warmaking, peacekeeping, and security functions of the military itself. Regimes of militarism constitute US liberal military empire, and they pervade the ideological and institutional, the material and discursive, the global and local, and act as a structuring force and logic not only in international geopolitical relations but also in the daily and intimate lives of (neo)colonized and gendered racial subjects. These regimes of militarism come with a high price tag: they drive US debt imperialism. As I discuss below, even as these regimes of militarism incur a debt that the United States does not need to repay, they install a figurative economy of what we might call militarized indebtedness onto the colonized. That is, they are made to feel indebted to the United States for its military intervention, often rescripted as “liberation” or, in the case of the Cold War, as the championing of freedom against communist totalitarianism. This conjunction of military empire and settler colonialism, or settler modernity, is a debt relation linking statecraft and capital. If settler modernity is an incomplete project, an ensemble of relations requiring continual re-creation and renovation, it mirrors the capitalist “delirium” of debt imperialism and of the debt form. As Cooper argues, “In the sense that the debt can never be redeemed once and for all and must be perpetually renewed, it reduces the inhabitable present to a bare minimum, a point of bifurcation, strung out between a future that is about to be a past that will have been. It thus confronts the present as the ultimate limit, to be deflected at all costs.”39 She goes on to observe that the American state, insofar as its continued self-reproduction coincides with the temporality of perpetual debt, is a nation that in economic terms has become purely promissory or fiduciary. This suggests a double movement in which “the very loss of foundation is precisely what enables the United States to endlessly refound itself, in the most violent and material of ways.” In this sense, debt imperialism is at once deterritorializing and reterritorializing, at once speculative and materialist; “the endless revolution (rolling over) of debt and the endless restoration of nationhood are inseparably entwined. The one enables the other. And the one perpetuates the other.”40 This dialectic of revolution-restoration, to elaborate on the contextual remarks I provided earlier on the very founding of the US nation, is the very logic of settler colonialism as both a structure and an event. And settler colonialism, the foundational and literally territorial condition of possibility of the United States, cannot be acknowledged as such, as the debt that is owed to Native Americans. This, conjoined with debt imperialism, the debt that is acknowledged but perpetually rolled over—the promise never made that makes possible and is conjoined with the promise never kept—attempts to deterritorialize and revolutionize, yet the US nation must also reterritorialize and restore or refound itselfwarp where the future and the past morph into each other without ever finding grounding in the present.41 If the unmade promise resides in an unacknowledged past, and the unkept promise can only be said to be that when the future itself becomes a past that will have been, then the present is the time of a holding to final account. The deflection of the present makes possible settler modernity’s continual reproduction through a variety of literal and figurative debt relations. It is a debt regime that functions in multiple ways. On the one hand, it is the debt to Indigenous communities that is unacknowledged. On the other hand, it provides the collateral for various debtor/creditor schemes. It is also, as I have elaborated, debt imperialism, or the debt that does not have to be repaid. Yet still, it continues to produce debt for various populations who are vulnerable to crushing indebtedness, or what Harvey calls “debt incumbency.”42 These seemingly antonymous forms of debt, or the deft ability of debt to operate as a sleight of hand, make crushingly clear how debt is not a strict economic relation. through the establishment of a military empire. The attendant temporal logic of this spatial dynamic, as Cooper writes, is a paradoxical time warp where the future and the past morph into each other without ever finding grounding in the present.41 If the unmade promise resides in an unacknowledged past, and the unkept promise can only be said to be that when the future itself becomes a past that will have been, then the present is the time of a holding to final account. 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#### The debt economy of US imperialism is maintained through necropolitics – the emancipation of the global south can never be permanent because those who are deemed as liberated as those are indefinitely indebted to the whims of logistical sovereignty

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This uneven distribution, or debt as governmentality, is what I call the necropolitics of the promise. The etymology of promise, from the Old French promesse, is a pledge, vow, guarantee, or assurance. From Latin, promissum is the noun use of the neuter past participle of promittere, which is to send forth, let go, foretell, or assure beforehand. Keeping in mind this temporal dimension of what a promise means and what it means to promise, I contend that the US abandonment of the gold standard has ushered in a fatal double standard. Even as the United States rolls over its debts indefinitely, it imposes structural adjustment policies, austerity measures, and foreclosures on other debtor countries and populations. Variously labeled Third World debtors, subprime borrowers, and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) of subSaharan Africa, these debtors are compelled to keep their promises, for failure to do so results in punishment and discipline. Some promises demand repayment more than others, and some must conform to the homogeneous time of repayment more than others. The debtor creditor relationship is not simply governed through the borrowing and lending of money but animated and enforced by an already existing asymmetry in power relations. As such, debt indexes not only the state and sum of money owed but also a broader social relation structured by violent disciplinary protocols compelling the indebted to conduct themselves in a manner that will maximize the likelihood of repayment. In this sense, to be indebted is not simply to owe money. It is to inhabit a subjectivity that robs one of the possibility of having multiple futures, multiple ways of conducting oneself and being in the world. This, then, is the relationship between debt and time: debt neutralizes time so that it conforms to the homogeneous time of repayment.43 Writing on the ascendance of neoliberalism and the debt economy since the 1970s, and following Nietzsche and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on debt, Maurizio Lazzarato observes, “The credit relation does not mobilize physical and intellectual abilities as labor does . . . but the morality of the debtor, his mode of existence (his ‘ethos’). The importance of the debt economy lies in the fact that it appropriates and exploits both chronological labor time and action, non-chronological time, time as choice, decision, a wager on what will happen and on the forces (trust, desire, courage, etc.) that make choice, decision, and action possible.”44 Indeed, whole nations and populations of the world have been saddled with permanent debt and cannot liberate themselves from the debt bind. They are subjected to what Gayatri Spivak calls “credit-baiting” and what Miranda Joseph has called a “pedagogy of ‘entrepreneurial’ subjectivity.”45 Indeed, we witness a role reversal in which the actual debtors have transmogrified into creditors, and vice versa. As Frantz Fanon writes, “Europe is the literal creation of the Third World.”46 That is, Europe and the United States owe a huge debt to the world that created them. Yet the afterlife of colonial plunder persists through the neocolonial policies, for example, of institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, whose officials Federici calls the conquistadors of today.47 David Graeber suggests that a debt is “just the perversion of a promise,” a promise “corrupted by both math and violence.”48 Yet for persons and places marked by a debt that, as Paula Chakravartty and Denise Ferreira da Silva write, “cannot be settled even with death,”49 debt is not simply a perversion of a promise. As I see it, debt in this instance is itself both a relation and an instrument of violence converted by the strange math of settler modernity and racial capitalism into a promissory note that binds for some but not for others. To promise, and to be promised, can mean radically different things depending on where the debtor, whether a nation or an individual, is located within asymmetries of power that are at once shifting and enduring. This asymmetrical relation is now triangulated by China, a newly emergent creditor building what journalist Howard French calls a “new empire” in Africa.50

#### Thus, I affirm fugitive publics of sanctions– the aff forwards a collective default on the global souths debt – the process of does not ask to forgive our debt but rather debt cannot be paid and that exists without a creditor

Gittens, R. A. (2021). Atlanta's Pink Trap House: Reimagining the Black Public Sphere as an Aesthetic Community. Theory & Event, 24(2), 434-455. Accessed 10/4/2023 CSUF JmB

The Black aesthetic community as represented by the **Pink Trap House resolves** some of the **issues** that the Black Political Sphere Collective addressed. In creating Black aesthetic communities, Black publics have been able to maintain a public aesthetic space with private implications and political repercussions. It has **done so by forming outside of state-sponsored institutions**, using signifyin’ to operate outside of the purview of the oligarchy, interrogating American abstract liberalism, reimagining Black consumption as a form of empowerment, and seeking intergender discussion. Black publics can only reestablish themselves in locations where the government does not abide: “church basements, hotel meeting rooms, other public arenas. ”While many institutions of the Black Public Sphere have been coopted by the government, aesthetic communities can be formed outside of state-sponsored institutions. The Pink Trap House takes issues out of enclaved state-sponsored institutions and into the discursive arena of the Black masses. However, Black aesthetic communities are still challenged by not having an institution readily gathered to make meaning of them and expand their political efficacy. Despite challenges, aesthetic communities like the Pink Trap House are able to signify and address a specified Black public. In doing so, the Pink Trap House also interrogates American liberalism, which Dawson states is a necessity for a Black counterpublic.76 It cross-examines an American liberal humanist ideology that ignores the institutional- and government-sponsored practices that enable racialization of space and ignore the negative effects of spatial segregation on Black people and people of color. In addition, rather than allowing discriminatory practices in the exchange economy to hinder Black consumers, the Pink Trap House reimagines Black consumption as a form of empowerment as a marketed aesthetic community. The marketing plan allows cooperative interaction among people in the Black public fostering competition amongst other music marketers, encouraging them to create engaging pragmatic aesthetic atmospheres. The Pink Trap House has received much acclaim as a marketing plan. However, Black aesthetic communities continue to be challenged by critics who label their actions deviant. The Pink Trap House received complaints throughout its one-month stay on Howell Mill Road and 2 Chainz did not renew the lease. In addition, people inside and outside of the Black community criticized the house as being a proponent of drug use. Thus, Black publics created in this way must be wary of counter acts positioned to dismantle them. This awareness should additionally extend to the possible commodification of the Black aesthetic. Though the Pink Trap House represents the use of marketing for political purposes, we must urge caution to the straddling of the fence: movement between materialism and revolutionary politics can be upended by neoliberal pursuits and greed. When successful it can flip the economic order. When it is not successful it can revalidate the order it was intended to change. **Lastly, the Pink Trap House and Black aesthetic communities in general provide a space for intersectional issues of race, gender, class, and sexuality**. The Pink Trap House was an aesthetic means of constituting Black masculinity and femininity outside of white authority, thus **providing space for Black cultural representation of freedom**, at least for the temporary time it was available. As **the house addressed an audience by crosscutting issues through the lyrics of the album, the pink color of the home, its events, activities, and art in the space were able to make a place for the artistic expression of intersectional voices**. Through a rhetorical analysis of the Pink Trap House, scholars can see unique ways in which Black people have combatted the dissolution of the private sphere and formed unique spaces of public thought and discourse. Public sphere theories, space and place scholars, and rhetorical critics can interrogate the Black counterpublic by turning to texts and events that serve the experience of Black masses and the working-class. Though the Pink Trap House is no longer available, the Trap Music Museum was opened in Atlanta in 2018 and features the original pink car that sat outside of 2 Chainz Pink Trap House. The museum, an honored means for preserving the Atlanta’s hip hop history and disrupting the normativity in the museum industry, is another avenue for rhetorical exploration. Such studies can diversify our understanding of African-American political ideologies and rhetorics. **Reflecting on the nature of the Black public as an aesthetic community opens up a broad new realm of discovery into how Black people and oppressed people create spaces of political deliberation within the confines of the hegemony and the lack of a private sphere.**

#### The creation of credit in pursuit of debt is a process of individuation that indefinitely projects settler colonialism and racial slavery into the future. Possessive credit-debt relationships produce catastrophe by design. Neoliberal politics can only continue to function by rendering individuals and ecologies as fungible objects in service of the market. The 1AC’s planning is a method of survival in difference against individuation.

Moten and Kelley 17 (Fred, Professor of Performance Studies at New York University; Robin D.G., Professor of American History at the University of California, Los Angeles, “Robin D.G. Kelley & Fred Moten In Conversation,” transcribed from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP-2F9MXjRE 31:49-55:57)

MOTEN: Well, um, first, I mean, the work I did around, um, you know, the ASA’s, um, you know, decision to endorse the academic and cultural boycott of Israel was really minimal and minor compared to a lot of other people who were really out front, um, and, and have been working tirelessly for that for many, many years. Um, and I think, you know, the, my contribution was more, you know, rhetorical in many ways in, in, in, and, and maybe, maybe theoretical only in the most minimal sense, in the sense that what I wanted to do was a couple of things. First, to recognize that, um, you know, let's say that the conditions of what people call modernity, um, in, in, in, in, or global modernity, that the fundamental conditions that make that up are, you know, settler colonialism. And I think we can talk about settler colonialism in ways that are broader than the normal way that we usually think of them as a set of violent and brutal relations between Europe and the rest of the world. Because I think it's really important. And, and, and again, our, our mutual friend and mentor Cedric Robinson, pointed this out emphatically, and in brilliant ways early on, that settler colonialism is also an intra-European affair. Um, and it's important to understand that. It's important to understand this historic relationship between settler colonialism in the enclosure of the commons, um, which is part and, part of the origins of, of what we now know or understand as capitalism. But if we understand that settler colonialism, that the transatlantic slave trade, um, and that, you know, the emergence of a set of philosophical formulations that essentially provide for us some modern conception of self that has as its basis a kind of possessive, heteronormative, patriarchal individuation, right? That's what it is to be yourself on the most fundamental level. You know, and if you ask anybody in the philosophy department, they'll tell you that that's true, you know, and they won’t be joking, right, that, um, that, these, that these constitute the basis of, of our modernity. But for most of the people who live in the world, actually for everybody who lives in the world, although most of the people in live in the world are actually able to both recognize this and say this, that modernity is a social and ecological disaster that we live, that we now attempt to survive. Okay? And if we take that up, then part of what's at stake is that we recognize that feminist and queer interventions against heteronormative patriarchy, that Black interventions against the theory and practice of slavery, which is ongoing, that indigenous interventions against settler colonialism constitute the general both practical and intellectual basis for not only our attempts to survive, but also our attempts to, as I said before, save the Earth. And, and I put it in terms that the great poet Ed Roberson puts it; not just to save the Earth, but to see the Earth before the end of the world. And this is an emergency that we're in now and it's urgent. Um, and I believe that there’s a specific convergence of black thought and indigenous thought that situates itself precisely in relation to, and is articulated through, the interventions of queer thought and feminist thought that we want to take up. And, and it, and it strikes me as, for me at least, it's, it's a way of taking up a kind an—it's, it’s a way of imagining how one might be able to, how we might be able to walk more lightly on the Earth. To honor the Earth as we walk on it, as we stand on it. To not stomp on it, to not stomp all over it, where every step you take is a claim of ownership. And, and this is one way to put it, would be to not so presumptuously imagine that the Earth can be reduced to something so paltry and so viciously understood as what we usually call home. This is part of the reason why the queer and the feminist critique is so important. It's a critique of a general problematic notion of domesticity. It's like another way of being on the Earth that doesn't allow you in some vicious and brutal way to claim that it is yours, right? Um, this is important and this is so, you know, often the methods that we use to claim the Earth as ours involved fences, borders. This manifests itself on a private level from household to household, but it also manifests itself on a national level, and at the level of the nation state, and it's not an accident that settler colonial states take it upon themselves to imagine themselves to be the living embodiment of the legitimacy of the nation state as a political and social form. For me, there's two reasons to be in solidarity with the people of Palestine. One is because they're human beings and they're being treated with absolute brutality, but the other is that there's a specific resistance to Israel as a nation state. And for my money, to be perfectly clear about this, I believe that this nation state of Israel is itself an artifact of antisemitism. If we thought about Israel and Zionism, not just as a form of racism that results in the displacement of Palestinians, but if we also think about them as artifacts of the historic displacement of Jews from Europe, right, in the same way that we might think of, let's say Sierra Leone or Liberia as artifacts of racist displacement, okay. If we think about it that way, okay, and another, and the reason I'm saying this is just to make sure that you know that there's a possible argument against the formulation that criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic when we know that Donald Trump is a staunch supporter, that people like Pat Robertson in the United States are staunch supporters that help us to the fact that you can be deeply anti-Semitic and support the state of Israel. These things go together. They're not antithetical to one another. So that it becomes important for us to be able to suggest that resistance to the state of Israel is also resistance to the idea of the legitimacy of the nation state. It's not an accident that Israel has taken upon itself, that when Israel takes upon itself, when the defense of Israel manifests itself as a defense of its right to exist, this is important. It's a defense, not just of Israel's right to exist, but of the nation state as a political form’s right to exist. And nation states don't have rights. What they're supposed to be are mechanisms to protect the rights of the people who live in them, and that has almost never been the case, and to the extent that they do protect the rights of the people who live in them, it's in the expense, it's at the expense of the people who don't, okay. So part of what's at stake, one of the reasons why it's at, it's important to pay particular attention to this issue, why we ought to resist the ridiculous formulation that singling out Israel at this moment is itself anti-Semitic is because it's important to recognize that Israel is the state.

#### Policy approaches to debt forgiveness are incompatible with a gesture towards mutual indebtedness. Logistics manifests as the driving force of militarized US imperialism – international relations are forged, un-made, and remade as a product of toxic debt. Debt forgiveness is the renewal of precarity through new obligations. The attempted imposition of precarity and credit, however, gestures to a fugitive public where debt accumulates without credit through study and planning amongst bad debtors, an alternative approach to debate and the resolution in excess of policy’s attempt at regulation.

Moten, F., & Harney, S. (2010). Debt and study. E-flux Journal, 14, 1. Accessed 7/6/2024 CSUF JmB TDI

They say we have too much debt. We need better credit, more credit, less spending. They offer us credit repair, credit counseling, microcredit, personal financial planning. They promise to match credit and debt again, debt and credit. But our debts stay bad. We keep buying another song, another round. It is not credit that we seek, nor even debt, but bad debt – which is to say real debt, the debt that cannot be repaid, the debt at a distance, the debt without creditor, the black debt, the queer debt, the criminal debt. Excessive debt, incalculable debt, debt for no reason, debt broken from credit, debt as its own principle Credit is a means of privatization and debt a means of socialization. So long as debt and credit are paired in the monogamous violence of the home, the pension, the government, or the university, debt can only feed credit, debt can only desire credit. And credit can only expand by means of debt. But debt is social and credit is asocial. Debt is mutual. Credit runs only one way. Debt runs in every direction, scattering, escaping, seeking refuge. The debtor seeks refuge among other debtors, acquires debt from them, offers debt to them. The place of refuge is the place to which you can only owe more, because there is no creditor, no payment possible. This refuge, this place of bad debt, is what we would call the fugitive public. Running through the public and the private, the state and the economy, the fugitive public can be identified by its bad debt – but only by its debtors. To creditors, it is just a place where something is wrong, though that something – the invaluable thing that has no value – is desired. Creditors seek to demolish that place, that project, in order to save those who live there from themselves and from their lives. They research it, gather information on it, try to calculate it. They want to save it. They want to break its concentration and store the fragments in the bank. All of a sudden, the thing credit cannot know – the fugitive thing for which it gets no credit – is inescapable. Once you start to see bad debt, you start to see it everywhere, hear it everywhere, feel it everywhere. This is the real crisis for credit, its real crisis of accumulation. Now debt begins to accumulate without it. That’s what makes it so bad. We saw it yesterday in the way someone stepped, in the hips, a smile, the way the hand moved. We heard it in a break, a cut, a lilt, the way the words leapt. We felt it in the way someone saves the best part just for you, and then it’s gone, given, a debt. They don’t want nothing. You got to accept it, you got to accept that. You’re in debt but you can’t give credit because they won’t hold it. Then the phone rings. It’s the creditors. Credit keeps track. Debt forgets. You’re not home, you’re not you, you moved without leaving a forwarding address called refuge. The student is not home, out of time, out of place, without credit, in bad debt. The student is a bad debtor threatened with credit. The student runs from credit. Credit pursues the student, offering to match credit for debt until enough debts and enough credits have piled up. But the student has a habit, a bad habit. She studies. She studies but she does not learn. If she learned, they could measure her progress, confirm her attributes, give her credit. But the student keeps studying, keeps planning to study, keeps running to study, keeps studying a plan, keeps building a debt. The student does not intend to pay. Debt cannot be forgiven, it can only be forgotten and remembered. To forgive debt is to restore credit. It is restorative justice. Debt can be abandoned for bad debt, it can be forgotten, but it cannot be forgiven. Only creditors can forgive, and only debtors, bad debtors, can offer justice. Creditors forgive debt by offering credit, by offering more from the very source of the pain of debt, a pain for which there is only one source of justice: bad debt, forgetting, remembering again, remembering it cannot be paid, cannot be credited, stamped “received.” There will be a celebration when the North spends its own money and is left with nothing, and spends again, on credit, on stolen cards, on account of a friend who knows he will never again see what he lent. There will be a celebration when the Global South does not get credit for discounted contributions to world civilization and commerce, but keeps its debts, changes them only for the debts of others, a swap between those who never intend to pay, who will never be allowed to pay, in a bar in Penang, in Port of Spain, in Bandung, where your credit is no good. Credit can be restored, restructured, rehabilitated, but debt forgiven is always unjust, always unforgiven. Restored credit is restored justice and restorative justice is always the renewed reign of credit, a reign of terror, a hail of obligations to be met, measured, dispensed, endured. Justice is only possible where debt never obliges, never demands, never equals credit, payment, payback. Justice is possible only where it is never expected, in the refuge of bad debt, in the fugitive public of strangers and not of communities, of undercommons and not neighborhoods, among those who have been there all along from somewhere. To seek justice through restoration is to return debt to the balance sheet and the balance sheet never balances. It plunges toward risk, volatility, uncertainty, more credit chasing more debt, more debt shackled to more credit. To restore is to not conserve again. There is no refuge in restoration. Conservation is always new. It comes from the place we stopped on the run. It’s made from the people who took us in. It’s the space they say is wrong, the practice they say needs fixing, the homeless aneconomics of visiting. Communities do not need to be restored. They need to be conserved, which is to say they need to be moved, hidden, restarted with the same joke, the same story, always somewhere other than where the long arm of the creditor seeks them – conserved from restoration, beyond justice, beyond law, in bad country, in bad debt. Communities are planned when they are least expected, planned when they don’t follow the process, when they escape policy, evade governance, forget themselves, remember themselves, have no need of forgiveness. They are never wrong. They are not actually communities, but debtors at a distance – bad debtors, forgotten but never forgiven. Give credit where credit is due, and render unto bad debtors only debt, only that mutuality that tells you what you can’t do. You can’t pay me back, give me credit, get free of me, and I can’t let you go when you’re gone. If you want to do something, then forget this debt, and remember it later. Debt at a distance is forgotten, and remembered again. Think of autonomia, its debt at a distance to the black radical tradition. In autonomia, in the militancy of post-workerism, there is no outside, refusal takes place inside and makes its break, its flight, its exodus from the inside. There is biopolitical production and there is empire. There is even what Franco “Bifo” Berardi calls “soul trouble.” In other words, there is this debt at a distance to a global politics of blackness emerging out of slavery and colonialism, a black radical politics, a politics of debt without payment, without credit, without limit. This debt was built in a struggle with empire before empire, when power was not held by institutions or governments alone, where any owner or colonizer had the violent power of a ubiquitous state. This debt attached to those who, through dumb insolence or nocturnal planning, ran away without leaving, left without getting out. This debt was shared with anyone whose soul was sought for labor power, whose spirit was born marked with a price. And it is still shared, never credited and never abiding credit, a debt you play, a debt you walk, a debt you love. And without credit, this debt is infinitely complex. It does not resolve into profit, seized assets, or a balance in payment. The black radical tradition is a movement that works through this debt. The black radical tradition is debt work. It works in the bad debt of those in bad debt. It works intimately and at a distance until autonomia, for instance, remembers, and then forgets. The black radical tradition is debt unconsolidated.

#### The 1AC’s planning creates modes of sociality through togetherness in brokenness under the seemingly in-escapable logistics of empire and alliances structured around militarized debt. The separation of politics from its neoliberal center – refusing the demand towards productivity, moral payment of our obligation to the resolution, to procedural limits, or static interpretations of community norms is a moment of sociality that organizes to survive a world of indifference

Chakravartty & Da Silva, ’12 (Paula, associate professor at the Gallatin School and the Department of Media, Culture and Communication, and Denise Ferreira, Professor and Director of the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice at the University of British Columbia, “Accumulation, Dispossession, and Debt: The Racial Logic of Global Capitalism—An Introduction,” American Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3, September 2012, pp. 361-385)

Let us close with two provocations by way of the question that now more than ever hovers over our work intellectual and political: What is to be done? In her presidential address to the American Studies Association in 2011, Ruth Wilson Gilmore made a passionate plea to better understand—and to formulate a plan of action for dissolving—the relationship between race, economy, and empire, not simply as an academic exercise but as a political act essential in an age of growing militarization and inequality.45 Her picture of the neoliberal drawing board highlights three sites: namely, "structure adjustments," "security enhancement," and "the anti-state state." For Gilmore the first task before those of us who find this drawing deeply violent—those of us who attend to and respond to the fact that it both deploys and reproduces the arsenal of racial/knowledge power, which renders so many, as she puts it, vulnerable to "premature death"—is to organize. "Policy," she teases, "is to politics what method is to research."46 Policy and politics have framed this special issue because the papers collected here, as they engage the state-market axis, or the political and economic moments of violence, deploy conceptual, analytic, and methodological tools that signal the relevance of both. These conversations and debates about the subprime crisis demonstrate the point highlighted in the first part of this introduction, that debt allows morality to encompass the relationship, thus foreshadowing how Dana's relationship with her master is also fundamentally political in character. Any program that takes up Gilmore's challenge would have to begin by undoing the separation between the ethical and the political at the core of liberal (and neoliberal) thinking. This would release us from the burden of representation, to dissipate what David Lloyd describes in his discussion of "what is to be done," after Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?": "Discussion of the essay seems to lead inevitably to a sense of ontological consternation, in that it gets read over and again as posing to the reader not merely the pragmatic question as to 'what is to be done?' in relation to the subaltern, but the question, 'by what right are you here assuming any relation to the subaltern?"'47 Because the violence of racial and colonial subjugation works so effectively at the level of representation, we need to refuse "ethical consternation" and recuperate the relationship as a descriptor of difference, and not commonality.48 This also allows us to avoid the equally paralyzing and more common obverse effect of "ethical oblivion": "We have no relation to the subaltern, so why should we care?"49 More importantly, moments and movements of resistance might be better understood by methods heeding Avery Gordon's call to engage the ghosts or Fred Moten's invitation to ask what subprime debtors might teach us, offering a wholly distinct ethical program, as suggested by Nahum Chandler.50 In a book published a year before the transformative events of the Arab Spring, Asef Bayat wrote of "the non-movement of the urban dispossessed" in the Middle East: "the collective actions of non-collective actors . . . that have come to represent the mobilizations of millions of the subaltern, chiefly the urban poor, Muslim women, and youth." Bayat's description of how the "quiet encroachment of the ordinary" impinging on the propertied and the powerful through the "unlawful acquisitions of land and shelter" resonate with everyday forms of resistance across much of the global South after three long decades of neoliberal reform. Bayat, among other observers of Middle Eastern history and politics, has argued that it was the "middle class poor"—educated but unemployed and "subsisting at the margins of the neoliberal economy"— who sparked the events in Tunisia and Egypt and who would inspire a new global politics of protest in 2011.51 A nonmovement movement sparked by the indignation of Arab "street vendors, sales-persons, boss-boys, or taxi drivers" found unity in the ousting of U.S.-backed autocratic leaders like Hosni Mubarak.52 While it is beyond the scope of this introduction to delve into a meaningful discussion of the lessons from the (ongoing) uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa, this detour is meant simply to signal the need to better understand the logic of solidarities forged out of difference. Similarly, those in the global North who celebrate the resurgence of a universalist oppositional politics with audible sighs of relief that the "era of identity politics is behind us" might be reminded by the essays in this collection that neoliberal dispossession and debt are not lived in the same way by everyone.53 Recognizing the significant political success of the OWS movement in shifting the debate on the economy away from the populist Tea Party narratives, Rinku Sen of the Applied Research Center called for organizing "that challenges segregation, not only that of the 1% from everyone else, but also that which divides the 99% from within."54 This cannot simply be accomplished, as some researchers have suggested, with "occupiers reaching out to working class people and people of color" engendering "trust and solidarity" by "occupying the hood and barrio."55 Once again, as many of the essays in this collection remind us, this paternalistic approach—because it begins from the assumption of the absence of a relationship—to the targeting of "othered" populations can hardly bring about radical social or global justice. The crises of neoliberalism at the heart of empire and the vast oppositional energies it has mobilized make Gilmore's provocation for a politics of organization based on an alternative ethic and for a method that will take us beyond structures of racial/postcolonial subjugation all the more pressing. For as indicated by the essays in this issue, these politics and policies would assume a negative answer to the question: Why should economically dispossessed Blacks and Latino/as pay for those who bet on and profited from their inability to pay the unpayable debts? In each of the financial crises discussed in this issue, we find that the blame has been placed on persons and places that, like Dana, have been produced by racial power/knowledge as marked by mental traits that render them unable to inhabit the economic, legal, and moral positions unique to the modern subject. An alternative ethics, the essays in this issue suggest, would have to necessarily focus on the very relationship and capacity arrested and denied by the tools of raciality—in particular by racial and cultural difference. From there, politics that acknowledges temporal and spatial differences, historical and geographic specificities could emerge, without "oblivion" or "consternation," while recognizing the unpayability of such debt. Without such attention to the productive yet violent effects of raciality, and the kind of comprehension of social and global difference it enables, it will be difficult to realize the kinds of solidarities necessary to sustain the organizing that Ruth Wilson Gilmore reminds us oppositional movements cannot do without.

## 1AR

### 1AR – Muller

#### the United States is a contestable assemblage of geographic, ethnic, moral, economic protocols

Muller 15 [Martin, Swiss National Science Foundation Professor in the Department of Geography and Sustainability at the University of Lausanne, “Assemblages and Actor-networks: Rethinking Socio-material Power, Politics and Space,” Geography Compass 9/1, p. 32// https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/gec3.12192]

Particular attention has gone to that most central organisation of all for political geographers: the state. Instead of conceiving the state as a unified actor, for Deleuze and Guattari, the state is an assemblage – ‘a phenomenon of intraconsistency. It makes points resonate together, … very diverse points of order, geographic, ethnic, linguistic, moral, economic, technological particularities’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 433). Thus, the state becomes an effect rather than the origin of power (Mitchell 1999). An increasing number of scholars have, over the past years, joined the chorus in calling for seeing the state as an assemblage of heterogeneous elements and reconstructing the socio-material basis of its functioning (Dittmer 2013a; Mountz 2004; Painter 2006; Passoth and Rowland 2010; Schueth 2012). Geographers have become particularly interested in investigating the spatial reach of state power, i.e. the question of how action is coordinated at a distance, territorial control is achieved, borders are drawn and reinforced (Allen and Cochrane 2007, 2010). After all, spatial state power neither exists a priori nor is it evenly distributed in space: it runs up against obstacles, works better in some places than in others, is more contested here and is less contested there.

### 1AR – Planning DA

#### Planning invents the means in a common, ongoing experiment with the informal and dis/order. Policy imposes the compulsion of scarcity—it designates that there is something wrong with brokenness; that we must be corrected.

Harney and Moten 13 (The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study, Minor Compositions)

Planning is self-sufficiency at the social level, and it reproduces in its experiment not just what it needs, life, but what it wants, life in difference, in the play of the general antagonism. Planning starts from the solidity, the continuity, and the rest of this social self-sufficiency, though it does not end there in having placed all these complex motion. It begins, as this disruption of beginning, with what we might call a militant preservation. And these are its means. Policy deputises those willing to, those who come to want to, break up these means as a way of controlling them, as once it was necessary to de-skill a worker in a factory by breaking up his means of production. And it does this by diagnosing the planners. Policy says that those who plan have something wrong with them, something deeply – ontologically – wrong with them. This is the first thrust of policy as dispersed, deputised command. What’s wrong with them? They won’t change. They won’t embrace change. They’ve lost hope. So say the policy deputies. They need to be given hope. They need to see that change is the only option. By change what the policy deputies mean is contingency, risk, flexibility, and adaptability to the groundless ground of the hollow capitalist subject, in the realm of automatic subjection that is capital. Policy is thus arrayed in the exclusive and exclusionary uniformity of contingency as imposed consensus, which both denies and at the very same time seeks to destroy the ongoing plans, the fugitive initiations, the black operations, of the multitude. As resistance from above, policy is a new class phenomenon because the act of making policy for others, of pronouncing others as incorrect, is at the same time an audition for a post-fordist economy that deputies believe rewards those who embrace change but which, in reality, arrests them in contingency, flexibility, and that administered precarity that imagines itself to be immune from what Judith Butler might call our undercommon precariousness. This economy is powered by constant and automatic insistence upon the externalization of risk, the placement at an externally imposed risk of all life, so that work against risk can be harvested without end. Policy is the form that opportunism takes in this environment, as the embrace of the radically extra-economic, political character of command today. It is a demonstration of the will to contingency, the willingness to be made contingent and to make contingent all around you. It is a demonstration designed to separate you from others, in the interest of a universality reduced to private property that is not yours, that is the fiction of your own advantage. Opportunism sees no other way, has no alternative, but separates itself by its own vision, its ability to see the future of its own survival in this turmoil against those who cannot imagine surviving in this turmoil (even if they must do so all the time). The ones who survive the brutality of mere survival are said by policy to lack vision, to be stuck in an essentialist way of life, and, in the most extreme cases, to be without interests, on the one hand, and incapable of disinterestedness, on the other. Every utterance of policy, no matter its intent or content, is first and foremost a demonstration of one’s ability to be close to the top in the hierarchy of the post-fordist economy. As an operation from above designed to break up the means of social reproduction and make them directly productive for capital, policy must first deal with the fact that the multitude is already productive for itself. This productive imagination is its genius, its impossible, and nevertheless material, collective head. And this is a problem because plans are afoot, black operations are in effect, and in the undercommons all the organizing is done. The multitude uses every quiet moment, every sundown, every moment of militant preservation, to plan together, to launch, to compose (in) its surreal time. It is difficult for policy to deny these plans directly, to ignore these operations, to pretend that those who stay in motion need to stop and get a vision, to contend that base communities for escape need to believe in escape. And if this is difficult for policy then so too is the next and crucial step, instilling the value of radical contingency, instructing participation in change from above. Of course, some plans can be dismissed by policy – plans hatched darker than blue, on the criminal side, out of love. But most will instead require another approach to command.” (Moten And Harney)

### 1AR – AT: Dollar Heg

#### No consensus OR possible alternative.

Emma Ashford & Matthew Kroenig 23, Columnist, Foreign Policy. Senior Fellow, Reimagining U.S. Grand Strategy, Stimson Center. Adjunct Assistant Professor, Georgetown University; Columnist, Foreign Policy. Vice President & Senior Director, Scowcroft Center for Strategy & Security, Atlantic Council. Professor, Department of Government & Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, "Can BRICS Derail the Dollar’s Dominance?" Foreign Policy, 09/01/2023, https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/09/01/brics-china-russia-dollar-finance-india-south-africa/. //JDi [italics in original]

MK: If those are my options, I’ll choose the latter. There is no universal agreement within the group on setting de-dollarization as a goal. Russia has shown the most interest, but its South African hosts said the topic was not even on the agenda. And while these countries are vulnerable due to their dependence on the dollar, there is no other game in town. The dollar still dominates global trade and 90 percent of foreign exchange transactions. For de-dollarization to happen, many independent economic actors around the world would have to agree to make the switch.

And switch to what? These countries all do a lot of business with China, not with one another. But given China’s capital controls, restrictions on currency convertibility, and its other economic problems, the renminbi won’t really work as an alternative.

I guess I am more worried about high-level geopolitical coordination among important countries that excludes the United States and its allies than about anything concrete, at this point.

EA: Yes, you could see this group acting as a coordinated counterweight to the G-7, for example—a way for some of these countries to interact more thoroughly in a non-Western setting.

The de-dollarization debate is complex. There’s little real evidence that de-dollarization is happening now, and, as you point out, there are few real alternatives to the dollar. But as scholars have noted, there is a strong potential for backlash to overused U.S. sanctions policies over time, and the BRICS expansion *could* add to the impetus to look for alternative payment infrastructures for banks and companies to bypass the European-owned SWIFT system. So, it’s not a big problem today, but it could add to one in the future. Most BRICS countries are not themselves sanctioned, but they all have an interest in maintaining trade ties with countries that are—and hold fears that the United States might target them in the future.

I do think U.S. policymakers aren’t taking this seriously enough.

MK: I agree that there is a theoretical rationale for why countries don’t want to be dependent on the dollar, but in order to move away from it, there has to be a viable alternative. And there just isn’t. Europe and Iran, for example, established INSTEX to try to get around the U.S. financial system in an attempt to save the Iranian nuclear deal during the Trump administration, and it did not work. The European Union, a major economic power with a stable and established currency, was reduced to setting up what was essentially a barter system.

After all, I am personally vulnerable due to my great dependence on oxygen, but I don’t have any good alternatives. Like it or not, the dollar is the oxygen of the global economic system.

#### Decline won’t cause a collapse or contagion.

Sean Ross 20, Founder and Manager of Free Lances Ltd, Former Editor-in-Chief at Financial Poise, “What It Would Take for the U.S. Dollar to Collapse”, Investopedia, 4/12/2020, https://www.investopedia.com/articles/forex-currencies/091416/what-would-it-take-us-dollar-collapse.asp

If the U.S. entered a steep recession or depression without dragging the rest of the world with it, users might leave the dollar. Another option would involve some major power, such as China or a post-European Union Germany, reinstating a commodity-based standard and monopolizing the reserve currency space. However, even in these scenarios, it is not clear that the dollar necessarily would collapse.

The collapse of the dollar remains highly unlikely. Of the preconditions necessary to force a collapse, only the prospect of higher inflation appears reasonable. Foreign exporters such as China and Japan do not want a dollar collapse because the United States is too important a customer. And even if the United States had to renegotiate or default on some debt obligations, there is little evidence that the world would let the dollar collapse and risk possible contagion.

### 1AR – AT: Heg DA

#### **Heg is unsustainable**

Walt 20 Stephen M. Walt, Stephen M. Walt is the Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University. 7-23-2020, "How to Ruin a Superpower," Foreign Policy, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/23/how-to-ruin-a-superpower/>

By the mid-1990s, the United States found itself in a position of primacy unmatched in modern history. Its combination of economic, military, and soft power dwarfed all others, and scholars such as William Wohlforth and Stephen Brooks offered sophisticated and well-reasoned arguments for why the unipolar era might last as long or longer than the bipolar era that preceded it. What these optimists did not anticipate, alas, was the series of self-inflicted wounds that the United States would suffer in the years that followed, a train wreck of recurring blunders that has accelerated and worsened under Donald Trump. In particular, Trump’s egregious mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic is producing debilitating long-term effects that will further accelerate America’s decline. Even if he is defeated in November and a Joe Biden administration does nearly everything right, the consequences of Trump’s reign of error will be with us for many years to come. Before Trump, the mistakes of the unipolar era fell under three main headings. The first error was adopting a grand strategy of liberal hegemony, which sought to spread democracy, markets, and other liberal values far and wide and to bring the whole world into a liberal order that was designed and led by the United States. This vastly ambitious strategy provoked a strong backlash from a variety of quarters, led to unnecessary and costly wars that squandered trillions of dollars, and undermined key sectors of the U.S. economy. The second mistake was to allow public institutions to deteriorate, by starving them of resources and then blaming them for all our problems. Republican leaders pushed tax cuts with scant regard for the fiscal consequences, while the IRS was defunded to the point that it could no longer deter or detect widespread evasion and fraud. Like the Prussian Junkers or the pre-revolutionary French aristocrats, wealthy Americans—including Trump—found countless new ways to avoid contributing enough to public coffers and with less and less fear that they might get caught. Instead of creating and funding robust, competent, and respected public institutions—the sort of administrative and managerial capacity that would be invaluable in a pandemic and that some other countries have—Americans decided they didn’t need them. The third misstep was the weaponization of partisan politics that began with the Newt Gingrich revolution in the U.S. Congress. As Julian Zelizer documents in a fascinating but disturbing new book, Gingrich’s decision to take down House Leader Jim Wright began a process that turned American politics into a blood sport where gaining and retaining power mattered more than advancing the public interest. Aided by talk radio hate-mongers like Rush Limbaugh and the factually challenged propagandists at the Weekly Standard and Fox News, conspiracy theories, slander, and the steady erosion of the “soft guardrails” of democracy replaced respectful debate, discussion, and compromise. Unfortunately, these three trends were also sharply at odds with each other. Remaking the world in America’s image is an enormous undertaking; if you were serious about it, you’d need a large, well-funded, and highly competent state to do it. Not only would running the world require a strong military, but it would also take a large, highly professional diplomatic corps to manage the political fallout abroad, a vast army of well-trained development experts, and lots of safety-net programs back home to deal with the destabilizing consequences of economic globalization. In this way, the grand strategy of liberal hegemony was fundamentally at odds with the endless demand for tax cuts and the concomitant desire to shrink the state. Liberal hegemony’s defenders got around this problem by assuming that the tides of history were running their way and that creating a global liberal order would be relatively easy. As Fareed Zakaria noted back in 1998, the result was a “hollow hegemony,” as the United States tried in vain to manage the world on the cheap. Moreover, if a single country hopes to mold local politics in lots of very different places, it damn well better be politically united at home. Running the world entails substantial sacrifices, and doing it effectively requires a powerful bipartisan consensus and robust public support. Needless to say, a poisonous atmosphere of relentless partisanship, where politicians on the make repeatedly grandstand over made-up scandals (remember those endless congressional hearings about Benghazi?), is antithetical to the forging of national unity. Endless gridlock also made American democracy a less appealing model for other societies. To be clear: I don’t think liberal hegemony would have worked even if the United States decided to pursue it in a more serious and sophisticated fashion. But doing it in the half-assed way America did made failure inevitable and at no small cost. The consequences of these three errors provided the toxic brew that allowed an incompetent and narcissistic charlatan like Trump to reach the White House. Since then, he has managed to drive America’s image around the world to record lows, bungled the trade war with China, pushed Iran closer to a nuclear bomb, and lavished praise on a number of murderous dictators (some of whom are openly hostile to the United States). His only significant foreign-policy achievement to date is getting Britain to decide not to use Huawei technology for its new 5G digital network, but that’s not much to show for nearly four years in office. Apart from appointing a lot of conservative judges, Trump’s major achievement as 2020 dawned was not screwing up the economic recovery that Barack Obama had bequeathed to him. Then came COVID-19. It’s not just that the United States has made mistakes—the very idea of U.S. global leadership is broken from the ground up. The administration’s disastrous mishandling of the pandemic has been well documented elsewhere, and there’s no need to rehearse that depressing story once more. Instead, I want to highlight what the long-term consequences for America’s global position are likely to be. Spoiler alert: It’s not a pretty picture. First, as I’ve argued before, Trump’s attempt to wish away the problem (along with the rest of his administration’s incompetent response) has tarnished America’s dwindling reputation as a society that knows how to get things done effectively. When countries all over the world are barring Americans from their territory due to legitimate fears that they will spread the disease, while looking on with a combination of shock and pity, you know something has gone badly wrong. Consider this: Rwandans, Uruguayans, and Algerians are all welcome to visit Europe this summer. Americans aren’t. Second, the economic depression caused by the pandemic will leave deep scars on the U.S. economy, and the damage increases the longer the crisis occurs. Jobs won’t suddenly reemerge once a lot of businesses have gone under, and bankruptcies and layoffs will continue until we get the virus under control. The U.S. Federal Reserve and Congress have provided emergency funds to cushion the blow temporarily, but these measures have ballooned the federal deficit to historically high levels. The longer the crisis continues, the bigger the pile of debt will be. Here’s the key takeaway: Although the pandemic has harmed every economy in the world, other countries have got it under control, can begin to reopen safely, and will suffer less long-term damage as a result. That’s why Trump’s failure is so disastrous: By prolonging the period where the United States has to maintain lockdowns and other restrictive measures, he has guaranteed that a subsequent recovery—whenever it finally occurs—will be slower and less vigorous. Third, the lockdown has exacerbated both intimate partner abuse and child abuse while making it harder to detect both. Schoolteachers often spot and report signs of child abuse, for example, but that is less likely to happen when kids aren’t physically in class. Chronic abuse has serious emotional consequences for its victims, and the longer the pandemic continues, the worse such problems will be. The result: The United States will have a higher-than-expected incidence of mental health problems in the future, which is both a tragedy for the victims and a further drain on U.S. power. Fourth, although keeping public schools closed is necessary to get the virus under control, it will inevitably have a negative effect on learning and put American kids even further behind their foreign counterparts in terms of educational achievement. Once again, education everywhere has suffered as a result of COVID-19, but the damage will be greatest in countries that didn’t deal with it successfully and are still facing an escalating spiral of new cases. Sad to say, the United States is one of those countries. Fifth, higher education will take a big hit, too. America’s colleges and universities have been the world’s best for decades and a huge driver of innovation for the U.S. economy. They are suffering from the shutdown and especially from the loss of foreign students, who have been both a source of revenue and in the past a further engine of technological advancement. Although the Trump administration has reversed its ill-advised attempt to ban foreign students receiving only online education this fall, the poor U.S. response to the pandemic will lead some of the foreign students who used to come to the United States to pursue educational opportunities in countries where their health is not at risk and universities are open for normal operations. America has long benefited from so-called “brain gain” (i.e., talented foreigners who arrived in the country for college or graduate school and chose to remain, lending their talents to innovative U.S. companies); that benefit is likely to be smaller in the future. The longer America trails the world in dealing with COVID-19, the more damage it will suffer on this front as well. Last but not least, the pandemic has not stopped women from bearing children, but many are now doing so in an atmosphere of enormous economic uncertainty and coronavirus-related stress. A growing body of research shows that maternal stress of all kinds has deleterious effects on fetal and early childhood development, with long-term consequences for a child’s physical well-being, cognitive abilities, emotional maturity, and overall life chances. Once again: These harmful effects are undoubtedly present in every country where the coronavirus has spread, but the damage will be greatest in countries where the virus has yet to be brought under control. That’s America. The United States still has a number of important advantages compared with other major powers, including abundant natural resources, a still innovative economy, temperate climate (at least so far), and an extremely favorable geopolitical location. Those qualities make long-term success more likely but do not guarantee it. The country also faces a number of serious rivals—most notably a still rising China—but recent decades suggest that Americans remain their own worst enemy. Trump didn’t deliberately and consciously set out to ruin the United States—and torpedo his own chances for reelection—he just couldn’t help himself. It is the rest of us—and especially our children and grandchildren—who will suffer the consequences.

#### Their nostalgia for the US-led liberal order deflects focus on the the violence inherent to it away from itself towards proximate solutions like the aff – this deflection normalizes imperial control, neoliberal exploitation, and racialized violence globally.

Morefield 19 (Jeanne Morefield, Professor of Politics at Whitman College, Professorial Fellow at the Institute for Social Justice at Australian Catholic University, PhD from Cornell University, January 8, 2019, “Trump’s Foreign Policy Isn’t the Problem,” *Boston Review*, <https://bostonreview.net/politics/jeanne-morefield-trump%E2%80%99s-foreign-policy-isn%E2%80%99t-problem>) gz

After two years of President Donald Trump, critics and commentators are still struggling to make sense of his foreign policy. Despite some hopes that he might mature into the role of commander in chief, he has continued to thumb his nose at most mainstream academic frameworks for analyzing and conducting foreign policy. Indeed, what makes Trump’s interactions with the rest of the world so confusing is the way he flirts with, and then departs from, the script. He may issue policies and give speeches that include words such as “sovereignty,” “principled realism,” and “peace through strength,” but they frequently appear cheek by jowl with racist rants, crass opportunism, nationalist tirades, and unrestrained militarism. It is this uncomfortable mixture of familiar and jarring that has proven disconcerting for many mainstream international relations scholars, particularly those “intellectual middlemen” who straddle the realms of academia, policy think tanks, and major news outlets. Yet rather than ask how U.S. foreign policy might have contributed to the global environment that made Trump’s election possible, most have responded to the inconsistencies of Trump’s world vision by emphasizing its departure from everything that came before and demanding a return to more familiar times. International relations experts thus express nostalgia for either the “U.S.-led liberal order” or the Cold War while, in outlets such as *Foreign Affairs* and the *New York Times*, they offer selective retellings of the country’s past foreign policies that make them look both shinier and clearer than they were. These responses do not offer much insight into Trump himself, but they do have much to tell us about the discourse of international relations in the United States today and the way its mainstream public analysts—liberals and realists alike—continue to disavow U.S. imperialism. For example, liberal internationalists such as John Ikenberry argue that Trump is guilty of endangering the U.S.-led global order. That system, according to Ikenberry and Daniel Deudney, emerged after World War II, when the liberal democracies of the world “joined together to create an international order that reflected their shared interests,” while simultaneously agreeing, as Ikenberry once put it, to transfer “the reins of power to Washington, just as Hobbes’s individuals . . . voluntarily construct and hand over power to the Leviathan.” The vision of cooperating nation-states may have originated in values that first “emerged in the West,” they argue, but these values have since “become universal.” In this accounting, Trump threatens the stability of U.S. liberal hegemony in two ways: by retreating from multilateral agreements such as the Iran nuclear deal, and by refusing to participate in the narrative of enlightened U.S. leadership. Future great threats to global stability, Ikenberry grumbled, were supposed to come from “hostile revisionist powers seeking to overturn the postwar order.” Now a hostile revisionist power “sits in the Oval Office.” By contrast, when realists such as Stephen Walt or John Mearsheimer criticize Trump, they start from the position that the liberal world order is a delusion, perpetuated most recently by post–Cold War members of the “elite foreign policy establishment.” Walt and others rightly point to the baseline hypocrisy of a “liberal Leviathan,” noting that the current fury over Russian election tampering and cyber espionage rings hollow given the long U.S. reliance on both strategies. This view accompanies a wistful longing for the putatively gimlet-eyed realism of the Cold War, a time when U.S. presidents understood that their role was to deter the Soviet Union, prevent the emergence of dangerous regional hegemons, and preserve “a global balance of power that enhanced American security.” Seen thus, Trump’s hyperbolic and embarrassing nationalism is a symptom of the abandonment of great power politics, while his fawning treatment of Vladimir Putin shatters any remaining hope that his self-styled “principled realism” might take us back to a more strategically realistic time. In the words of former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, watching the Trump–Putin news conference was like “watching the destruction of a cathedral.” But what is Trump actually doing to destroy this cathedral? What makes Trump’s words and behavior so objectionable? Previous presidents have pulled out of multilateral agreements, entered into disputes with allies, and engaged in protectionism and trade wars. The majority of the Trump administration’s planned and ongoing military deployments are in regions where the military was already deployed by previous administrations in the name of the War on Terror. Moreover, Trump’s national security and national policy statements are littered with the vocabulary of the very experts who find him so terrifying. What, then, makes Trump’s foreign policy such a singular threat? Trump’s foreign policy is disturbing because it is uncanny—both grotesque *and* deeply familiar. Like a funhouse mirror, Trump’s vision of the world reflects back a twisted image of U.S. global politics that *is* and *is not* who we are supposed to be. For instance, deterrence strategy may require the rest of the world to believe that the U.S. president might use nuclear weapons, but the president is *not* supposed to hint that he might actually do so. The president is supposed to be concerned with regulating the flow of immigrants but not reveal that race plays a role in these calculations by blurting the phrase “shithole countries.” The president is supposed to believe that the United States is the most blessed, exceptional country on Earth—as Barack Obama put it, “I believe in American exceptionalism with every fiber of my being”—but *not* engage in excessive nationalism by making “total allegiance” the “bedrock” of his politics, or combine it with a commitment to “make our Military so big, powerful & strong that no one will mess with us.” Sometimes Trump’s utterances hit so close to home that they surpass uncanniness. In an essay by Sigmund Freud on the uncanny, Freud says dolls and mannequins unsettle precisely because of the possibility that they might actually be alive, a discomfort that has inspired nightmares, works of literature, and horror movies. Trump, by contrast, is a living nightmare. He opens his mouth and the things-which-must-never- be-said simply fall out. Thus, when Bill O’Reilly asked him why he supported Putin even though he is a “killer,” Trump shot back, “There are a lot of killers. You think our country’s so innocent?” Trump’s willingness to say such things has precipitated an existential crisis in the international relations world. U.S. foreign policy, as an academic discourse and political practice, is built on the delicate foundation of what Robert Vitalis has called the “norm against noticing,” This deflective move has long been the gold standard of international relations; under its rules of play, IR experts act as if the United States has never been an imperial power and that its foreign policy is not, and has never been, intentionally racist. The norm against noticing thus distinguishes between the idea of the United States as a necessary world-historical actor and the reality of how the United States acts. In that reality, the United States has long been an imperial power with white nationalist aspirations. Given the racialized nature of U.S. imperial expansion, it makes sense that Alexis de Tocqueville predicted, in a chapter entitled “The Three Races of the United States,” that the United States would one day govern “the destinies of half the globe.” In its early days, while still a slave-holding country, the United States asserted its sovereignty through genocide on a continental scale and annexed large portions of northern Mexico. The country went on to overthrow the independent state of Hawaii, occupied the Philippines and Haiti, exerted its regional power throughout Latin America, expanded its international hegemony after World War II, and became what it is today: the world’s foremost military and nuclear power with a $716 billion “defense” budget that exceeds the spending of all other major global powers combined. “Taking over from the British Empire in the early twentieth-century,” argues James Tully, the United States has used its many military bases located “outside its own borders”—now nearly 800 in over 80 countries— to force open-door economic policies and antidemocratic regimes on states throughout the formerly colonized world. An extremely partial list of sovereign governments that the United States either overthrew or attempted to subvert through military means, assassinations, or election tampering since 1949 includes Syria, Iran, Guatemala, Lebanon, the Congo, Cuba, Chile, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Grenada, Cuba, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Iraq, Yemen, Australia, Greece, Bolivia, and Angola. Such interventionist policies have contributed substantially to today’s inegalitarian world in which an estimated 783 million people live in profound poverty. In sum, for untold millions of humans in the Global South, the seventy years of worldwide order, security, and prosperity that Ikenberry and Deudney associate with Pax Americana has been anything but ordered, secure, or prosperous. And yet the norm against noticing prevents foreign policy analysis from even acknowledging—let alone grappling with—the relationship between race and imperialism that has characterized U.S. international relations from the country’s earliest days. This regime of politely un-seeing—of deflecting—connections between U.S. foreign policy, race hierarchy, and colonial administration was clearly not in effect when *Foreign Affairs* was released under its original name: the *Journal of Race Development*. This began to change, however, in the 1920s. Among other contributing factors, World War I, the rise of anti-colonial revolutions, and the emergence of liberal internationalism as a popular ideology helped convince foreign policy experts in the United States and Europe to adopt a policy language oriented toward “development” rather than imperialism or racial difference. Mainstream international relations scholarship today remains committed to a narrative in which the discipline itself and U.S. foreign policy has always been and remains race blind, concerned solely with the relationship between sovereign states who cooperate, deter, or compete with one another in a global system in which the United States is simply, like Caesar, the “first citizen” (Ikenberry) or “the luckiest great power in modern history” (Walt). For liberals, this involves a studied erasure of the imperial origins of twentieth-century internationalism in the League of Nations’ Mandate system and the complicity of Woodrow Wilson in preserving, as Adom Getachew puts it, “white supremacy on a global scale.” For realists, it requires both forgetting the anti-Enlightenment origins of postwar realist thought and reinserting the “security dilemma” back into history so that, with the help of Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes, the world can—as Slavoj Žižek says—“become what it always was.” International relations experts will acknowledge U.S. violence and overreach when necessary, but routinely read the illiberalism of U.S. foreign policy as an exception that is not at all representative, in Anne Marie Slaughter’s words, of “the idea that is America.” Slaughter, with Ikenberry, can consider bad behavior only briefly and only in the service of insisting that what matters most is not what the United States actually *does* with its power but what it *intends* to do. Yes, “imperialism, slavery, and racism have marred Western history,” Ikenberry and Deudney argue, but what matters is that liberalism “has always been at the forefront of efforts—both peaceful and militant—to reform and end these practices.” Indeed, even those public intellectuals such as Niall Ferguson and Michael Ignatieff who, after September 11, called for the United States to *embrace* its status as an imperial power, framed their arguments in deflective, liberal terms. By contrast, because realists project the security dilemma retroactively into history (while also simultaneously excising imperialism) they can only see the U.S. destabilization of Third World economies, assassinations, and secret bombings as tragic necessities (great powers, claims Mearsheimer, “have little choice but to pursue power and to seek to dominate the other states in the system”) or as the result of liberals’ ill-advised desire to force “our” values on other nations. Both of these deflective strategies reinforce the illusion that we live, in Nikhil Pal Singh’s words, in an “American-centered, racially inclusive world, one organized around formally equal and independent nation states” where some states just happen to have more power than others, and where the alternative—Russian or Chinese hegemony—is too frightening even to contemplate. That deflection would play such an outsized role in supporting the ideological edifice of international relations today is hardly surprising. Turn-of-the-century British liberals who supported their empire also drew upon a variety of different deflective strategies to reconcile the violence and illiberalism of British imperial expansion with the stated liberal goals of the Empire. Such deflection made it impossible for these thinkers—many of whom would go on to work as some of the first international relations scholars in Britain and help found The Royal Institute of International Affairs—to link the problems of empire with the violence and disruption of imperialism. Similarly, deflection within international relations today obscures the U.S. role in maintaining the profoundly hierarchical, racist, insecure, deeply unjust reality of the current global order. It also makes it impossible to address how U.S. foreign policy (covert and overt) has contributed to the destabilization of that order by creating the circumstances that give rise to “failed states,” “rogue regimes,” and “sponsors of terrorism.” Moreover, it impedes any theorizing about how the widespread appeal of Trump’s xenophobia at home might, in part, be the product of U.S. foreign policy abroad, the bitter fruit of the War on Terror and its equally violent predecessors. In other words, in the grand tradition of liberal empire, U.S. foreign policy deflection actively disrupts the link between cause and effect that an entire science of international relations was created to explain. What makes Trump’s attitude toward foreign policy so uniquely unhinging for international relations experts, then, is the fact that it is essentially undeflectable. When he explains to Theresa May that refugees threaten European culture or calls Mexican immigrants killers, he lays bare the meant-to-be unutterable fear of nonwhite migration that has haunted British, U.S., and European imperialists and foreign policy experts for over a century. When he summons the fires of nationalism to demand an unprecedented increase in the military budget, and then gets it with the overwhelming support of House and Senate Democrats, he reveals that constitutional checks on the commander in chief are only as good as the willingness of Congress to resist jingoism. When he calls nations populated by brown and black people shitholes, he openly advertises the unspoken white supremacist edge that has informed U.S. economic, development, energy, and foreign policies since the late nineteenth century. Trump’s Muslim ban is simply the War on Terror on steroids. In short, Trump’s foreign policy is unprecedented not because of what it *does*, but because Trump will openly *say* what it does—and because of what that then says about us as a nation. The discomfort Trump provokes ought to prompt international relations experts to reflect on the failings of their discipline to reckon with the relationship between U.S. imperialism, U.S. foreign policy, and the constellation of xenophobia, militarism, racism, and nationalism that haunts our days. The fields of intellectual and legal history and political theory are far ahead of international relations in their critical interrogation of the ideologies that sustain empire at home and abroad. In addition, Trump’s election has emboldened activists to make increasingly explicit the connections they see between a racialized, anti-immigrant politics of domestic dispossession and violence and the history of U.S. imperialism in the world. Unfortunately the same does not appear to be true for the majority of intellectual middlemen who set the public tone for U.S. foreign policy. Trump is, finally, both the emperor with no clothes and the pointing child, begging to hold a big military parade so we can collectively acknowledge the naked imperialist power at the heart of U.S. foreign policy. Trump practically screams at the United States to look at itself. And yet, the more he screams, the more the intellectual enablers avert their eyes. They are busy looking elsewhere—anywhere really—*except* at that nakedness.

## A2 Cap

### 1AR – Perm Do Both

**Permutation do both: Abolition of antiblack structures must be at the center of any communist politic through the Other’s orientation to death– this party that allows us to commune with and in debt to each other, makes us communists, not out of self-interest, but out of a collective commitment to dismantle antiblackness and capitalism.**

**Chambers-Letson 18.** Joshua, Associate Professor in Performance Studies at Northwestern University, “*After the Party: A Manifesto for Queer of Color Life*.” NY: New York University Press, 2018

The weekend after your death, everyone converges at your apartment. I get the call, but wait a day to catch my bearings before catching a flight from Chicago to New York. A cab through the Village to your building where your doorman doesn’t stop us and we walk right in. When the elevator hits your floor, the familiar sound of a party pouring through the opening doors and into the empty space beside us where you used to be. I don’t know why it surprised me that it would be a party. Even though, or maybe because it belonged to your employer, your apartment was our party’s headquarters. It was something you stole back to give to those who didn’t have a home. Now, in the wake of your death, every room is full of people who are full with the loss of you. Someone puts a drink in my hand. This is just the first of an endless string of parties. Our party was the formation of a new communist party. The party: an organic entity, a living, breathing being, a gathering together of the multiple in the one, an obscure order, a whole which is not one, a many that is singular, a kind of provisional “we” at difference with itself from the inside out. The party, writes Fred Moten, “could be called the house party but don’t let that mislead you into thinking that house implies ownership; this house party is of and for the dispossessed, the ones who disavow possession, the ones who, in having been possessed of the spirit of dispossession, disrupt themselves.” The party is as much a site of refuge as it is the site of revolutionary planning, but “even though the party is, and takes place in, and takes place as, a kind of refuge, refuge still indicates that those who take it are refugees and people tend not to want to have to live like that.” The party, as refuge, is a place to catch one’s breath when you can’t breathe. It is a way of staying alive and of keeping each other alive. In your case, it was a way of sustaining your life after your death. And it was akin to what you called the punk rock commons or the “commons of the incommensurate.” Our parties go on for days, for years. They would begin around ten a.m., when the hangover was starting to wear off and we’d roll from one gathering to the next: cocktails, a memorial, breakfast with drinks, lunch with drinks, a family dinner, an impromptu gathering at some­ one’s house, a joint on the balcony, a talk in the hallway. Repeat. After your first memorial, we pick up drinks to take to a friend’s apartment and converge with an endless flood of smiling faces smiling sometimes. They verge, fall, pull toward and apart from each other. All the wars are briefly suspended and for a few flickering moments, as Wallace Stevens might have said, “We collect ourselves, out of all the indifferences, into one thing.” Though we were collected out of indifference by the shock of your death, we remain in difference from each other, which is to say that were not quite one thing but instead a singular being made up of the many, or what Jean-Luc Nancy calls being-singular-plural: “Being cannot be anything but being-with-one-another, circulating in the with and as the with of this singularly plural coexistence.” So rather than the coercive “we” that dominated the communist parties of historical communism, we became a “we” in difference from itself, gathered together in the wake of your death. I’ll be honest, I was kind of devastated. After your death I spent a lot of time trying to find you in the places you used to hide and especially the songs you used to listen to. The first thing I put on was the Germs (you loved Darby Crash) but that didn’t last long. I never shared your attachment to punk. Being manifestly uncool, my relationship to punk was pretty much Siouxsie Sioux, to whom I cathected around the age of twelve. There was something about her rejection of the domestic, suburban, and normal that made sense to teenage me—a queer black, brown, and blue boy adrift and alone in Northern Colorado. I don’t think you had strong feelings for Siouxsie one way or the other, but there is more than a passing resemblance between my teenage attachment to Siouxsie and yours to Crash. Both began as bad objects in their scenes: Crash in Los Angeles and Siouxsie in London. They were unlikely figures for two queer of color kids to identify with, least of all because both attempted (and failed) to appropriate (ironically or otherwise) the symbols of white supremacy by employing the swastika in their early acts. The swastika was something Siouxsie tried to atone for and that Crash refused to atone for and didn’t have time to do anyway because he, like you, died too young. Siouxsies name was itself an appropriation of the tribal name of the Sioux people, another chapter in the ongoing dispossession of the already dispossessed. We shouldn’t forget these transgressions, their unnerving entanglements with the violence of whiteness and white supremacy, but something about them nonetheless helped us sustain life in spite of the odds stacked against us. And the odds are stacked against queer teen­ agers of color in these United States. Darby’s and Siouxsie’s performances became the stage for what you described as the punk rock commons, “a being with, in which various disaffected, antisocial actants found networks of affiliation and belonging that allowed them to think and act otherwise, together, in a social field that was mostly interested in dismantling their desire for different relations within the social.’” In this punk essay, you cited Tavia Nyong’o, who argues that the word “punk” owes a debt to blackness, queerness, and the violent measures through which a phobic world responds to both. Siouxsie acknowledged a part of that debt when describing the queerness of the parties that gave birth to Londons early punk scene: It was a club for misfits, almost. Anyone that didn’t conform. There was male gays, female gays, bisexuals, non-sexuals, everything. No-one was criticized for their sexual preferences. The only thing that was looked down on was being plain boring, that reminded them of suburbia. Notice here how Siouxsie’s party resonates with the one described by Moten: “This is the party of the ones who are not self-possessed, the non-self-possessive anindividuals. This is the party of the ones in whom the trace of having been possessed keeps turning into this obsessive compulsive drive for the total disorder that is continually given in continually giving themselves away.” Which is a way of saying that our party owes a debt to the black radical tradition as much as to the radical tradition of black and brown queer house parties on Chicago s South and West sides. Unlike Crash, Siouxsie survived the early 1980s and with her survival came the emergence of a new sound characterized by thick, textured melodies, lush orchestration, and heavily processed vocals. Some people described it as post-punk and others described it as goth, but everyone seemed to agree that it lingered in the darkness—perhaps an unacknowledged way of acknowledging her debt to blackness. Like blackness, Siouxsie’s darkness wasn’t merely negative space. Her dark­ ness was from the underside, the B-Side, the upside-down world of the normative, retrenched, dystopian, suburban, white, neoliberal hell that took hold in Thatcher’s Britain and Reagan’s United States. Siouxsie’s darkness was a pharmakon to the annihilating “light” cast by the shining city on the hill. It was dense, dark negation as the negation of the negation. Darkness, for the members of Siouxsie’s party, was a place where the freaks could gather, take cover, and keep each other alive as the “light” tried to burn them out of their holes and snuff them out of existence. If their party was increasingly imperiled by the normative regimes of social comportment demanded by Thatcher and Reagan, the 1986 song “Party’s Fall” tells the story of the breakdown and falling apart as a condition of possibility. In the song, the collapse of each party becomes the condition for the emergence of something new the next night: “Your parties fall around you Another night beckons to you Your parties fall around you Another night beckons to you” That the party falls apart only to come back another night is why, following Moten, “the party I’m announcing is serially announced.” In “Party’s Fall” the present is always returning to itself, as Siouxsie points us toward a future in which the very thing that has fallen apart (the party) reconstitutes itself. Which is a good thing, it turns out, because the party is the one thing standing between the subject of her address and annihilating loneliness. About a year after your death, a friend and I are talking about you in a bar. He looks at his drink and says, “I used to be alone. And then I met him and I wasn’t alone. Now he’s gone and I’m alone again.” The party is a way of ameliorating loneliness, and the endlessly renewable capacity to throw another party becomes Siouxsie’s condition for a practice of being with in which the misfit’s loneliness becomes the conditions for a relation of being together in difference and discord with other misfits that are lonely and (un)like her. I suspect that this is why we threw so many parties after you died. They were a way of bringing you back to us, of making us a little less alone again. Ours was not a political party, like The Communist Party. Political parties endure, but they often endure through coercion, violence, and force. Instead, I mean our communist party as a name for what Siouxsie describes as the endlessly renewable chain of events performed into being by a plurality of broken people who are trying to keep each other alive. For you. Crash’s performances were an antidote to (but not a denial of) loneliness. Loneliness is common, and it is often crushing for queers and trans people of color. But it can also be a condition for the emergence of queer sociality and the undercommons. While it would be easy to assume that your punk essays are about the white boys in them (Crash in particular), it would be more accurate to say that they are about the work to which queers of color put these performances while struggling to stay alive, get free, and open up other ways of being (and surviving) in the world together. “Through my deep friendships with other disaffected Cuban queer teens who rejected both Cuban exile culture and local mainstream gringo popular culture,” you wrote in Cruising Utopia, “and through what I call the utopia critique function of punk rock, I was able to imagine a time and a place that was not yet there, a place where I tried to live.”” Today, we place an emphasis on “tried.” Near the end of Siouxsie’s song, she utters the phrase “maybe you’re alone,” breathlessly as if it were an aside. But this is the kind of aside that matters so she repeats it again, supporting the voice with the fullness of a wail. As she sings this bridge to nowhere, you would have noticed that the lyrics reach melodic resolution, which has been otherwise absent in a song that lingers in the minor key. Siouxsies wail stretches across the lyric, her voice breaking on the word happiness : My happiness depends on knowing / this friend is never alone / on your own.” I can’t help but imagine that as she begs her friend not to cry, applying her signature wail to the lyric and promising “a party on our own,” that she’s singing to a much younger version of you or me or some other teenage queer and trans black and brown boy and girl perched on the precipice of self-obliteration. Her wanting for a commons (to be with and take care of a friend in need) is Siouxsie’s precondition for a life in happiness. It was yours as well. If I follow you, Siouxsie, and Moten in suggesting that the party has some kind of relationship to the making of the (under)commons, I am also following Nancy when he writes that it is death that gives birth to community. After all, our communist party was formed in the wake of your death. “It is death—but if one is permitted to say so it is not a tragic death, or else, if it is more accurate to say it this way, it is not mythic death, or death followed by a resurrection, or the death that plunges into a pure abyss; it is death as sharing and as exposure,” he writes, “it is death as the unworking that unites us.” Our party was born from your death. So in the wake of your death we threw parties to resurrect you. Though yours was a death without resurrection, performance and parties were a way of sustaining you, bringing you back, and keeping you alive. Your death was tragic, brutal in its suddenness. But in spite of what people might think, there was nothing mythic about it. It was mundane. You were another gay brown man dead before fifty. To say that queer and trans of color death is mundane is not to diminish their horror, but on the contrary to name the shocking fact of this kind of deaths everydayness. Trans and queer of color life is lived in constant and close proximity to death. “In any major North American city,” writes Rinaldo Walcott, the numerous missing black women (presumed murdered), the many ‘missing’ and murdered trans-women, the violent verbal and physical conditions of black life often leading to the deaths of gay men, lesbian women, and trans people remain a significant component of how black life is lived in the constant intimacy of violence on the road to death. Death is not ahead of blackness as a future shared with others; death is our life, lived in the present.” For similar reasons Christina Sharpe describes black life thus: "I want... to declare that we are Black peoples in the wake with no state or nation to protect us, with no citizenship bound to be respected, and to position us in the modalities of Black life lived in, as, under, despite Black death.” If I think of your death in relation to the forms of black life and death named by Walcott and Sharpe, it is not to suggest that they are commensurable. This would distract us from the way the history of black death in the Americas from the Middle Passage forward produces a present in which, as Walcott insists, “Black people die differently.” But what I could see clearly in the wake of your departure is that black and brown queer and trans death, like the deaths of women of color, produced by different yet overlapping histories of colonialism, capital accumulation, white supremacy, and cis-heteropatriarchy, share something with each other not in spite of but because of their difference. I want to suggest that black and brown people’s emancipation from these conditions are mutually implicated, not in spite of but in relation to our incommensurability. What we share is that under such conditions, which are far beyond our ability to control them, survival can be hard. So, if I call your death mundane, it’s not to underplay the importance of your life. It’s only meant to serve as a bitter acknowledgment of the ubiquitous and disproportionate distribution of death toward queers, women, and trans people of color. Dying for different reasons, often dying before really living, but dying nonetheless. It can be as hard to survive as it is to live on in the wake of those who didn’t. But you taught me that performance is imbued with a weak power of resurrection, or at least the power to sustain some fragment of lost life in the presence of a collective present. Performance, you wrote, is what allows minoritarian subjects to “take our dead with us to the various battles we must wage in their names—and in our names. And performance is also a way of drawing people together. Throwing parties was a way of resurrecting you and keeping you alive. Being with each other was a way of being with you. In the wake of your death we became common to each other. We became communists. In the months after you died there was a proliferation of memorials. One friend joked that we were trapped in the Memorial Industrial Com­ plex. After one of them, a group of us stole away late in the afternoon, collecting ourselves in the basement of a West Village nightclub, (Le) Poisson Rouge. The event recalled the kind of queer happenings that used to occur in places like SqueezeBox!, Club 57, or in the basement of the Fez, but no doubt sadder and muter. There was a bar against the wall of a cramped, black, downstairs room and a platform set up at the front, before which people huddled on the floor, or stood wherever they could find a spot. Carmelita Tropicana emceed a host of performances for and inspired by you: Guinevere Turner read a concrete poem composed of your better voicemails, Matmos reperformed Darby Crash’s signature circle burn (burning a circle into the skin with a cigarette), and Nao Bustamante arrived as a grieving punk widow, draped in a fur coat with billowing black veils shrouding her face. The costume, an ostentatious bid for the role of prime griever, materialized what she would later de­ scribe as her performances “aesthetics of grief.”' Before grieving, how­ ever, the awkward tedium of the live. Accompanied by a guitarist dressed in a horse mask, Jason Martin Nao began assembling the stage. It took some time – too much time – and at one point Carmelita, who was working hard to fill the air, teased. You know, I think they’re just going to do this and they’re not doing anything. It’s going to be a durational performance.” But soon enough, the performance began. Nao stood at the front of the space, dropping the’ coat, exposing her body to the room, with a skinny bikini-esque bottom and top, high-heeled boots, and the lengthy veil reaching down to her midsection. She danced enthusiastically to a vintage Spanish-language beach song before setting the record to a slower, sultrier number. Laying on the platform, torqueing Her body in a host of directions and pulling a microphone to her face, she sang, but instead of singing she was screaming. Something between a Darby Crash or Alice Bag rendition of Somewhere My Love” and the howl of indescribable grief After I got the call that you were dead, I sat in the middle of the street for a few minutes, early morning Chicago traffic driving around me, be­ fore calmly walking back home and through the front door, where I began to howl. A few years later I sit in Nao’s Los Angeles studio and ask her about that performance. “All performance is an expression of pain,” she told me. “It’s kind of like a primal scream.” As she screamed the song her voice was frayed, shredding at its outermost limit and shrieking the lyrics into the broken air: “Someday we’ll meet again my love.” A lie, perhaps, but the truth was harder to bear, and as if to help her carry the burden, some people in the audience began to shriek along with her. She was bringing them together. Performance “is like hosting a party” she says."" The naked vulnerability of Bustamante’s screaming body reminded me of your description of her 1992 performance, Rosa Does Joan, in which exhibitionism is a mode of comportment that insists on a certain decibel of emotion, one that like many aspects of Latino culture are considered too loud or unharmonious by normative ears ... [and] scrambles the public/private dictates of normative desire.” You called her a “vulnerability artist,” transforming her body into a conduit for “ugly feelings” and affective excess, while revaluing and revealing both to be queer, brown ways of creatively negotiating and living in a limiting world. Figure P.1. Photo of America the Beautiful in Nao Bustamante’s studio, July 9,2017. Photograph by the author. (Reproduced with artist’s permission.) It is a lot for one body to bear this kind of burden, but in performance the burden is shared out amongst the many. While she screamed into the microphone, one could catch shades of her character in America the Beautiful, who you described as “an individual in need of public feelings, a character representing a raw need for public emotion and recognition.” In that piece, Bustamante’s character (a brown woman) reaches to attain (and fails spectacularly to realize) the impossible, self-negating ideal of whiteness. The screaming mourner before us, however, stubbornly clings to the darkness and to the black and brown recesses of queer of color grief and rage. But she is no more likely to be successful since she was reaching for someone who could not come back. Martin’s guitar goes wild and Bustamante’s screaming stops as she slowly rolls her body off the platform and into the audience. They part, making way for her, as she swims through them like a body surfer floating on (or, rather, wriggling through) a mosh pit. The act was entirely improvised. “I didn’t have a plan for after. After the screaming. I didn’t have a plan,” she told me. “How do you get out of that kind of performance?” Then, as she made her way around the room, something happened: People started to reach out to touch her. At first to help her move, lifting and prodding her body through the packed space. But then it was something else, as if they were taking care of her. “It wasn’t rehearsed,” she said; “the whole point of the piece was to lose it.” In losing it, she became common to us and we become common with her. Touched by her breakdown, we reached out to touch her, sometimes literally, as if responding to and sharing her “raw need for public emotion and recognition.” “It was healing,” she surmised, “not that anyone can heal that quickly. And then the performance didn’t end so much as she crawled up next to the bar, where she stood up and ordered a drink. She was “not letting it end by never ending it.” Which is maybe another way of saying that the end was just the beginning of a new durational performance: life in the time after your death. There is something communist about the way a performance can draw a room together, allowing radically different people to share life (and death) as they try to take care of each other. Each person touching Bustamante’s body had a different proximity to you, to her, or to the scream, and it was that difference that constituted the grounds of our being together. Whatever our relation of being together was, it was founded in difference, rather than a relation of equivalence. In the “Critique of the Gotha Program,” Marx describes communism as a system of redistribution founded on relations of nonequivalence: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!” Communism was necessary, Marx argued, because the capitalist mode of production takes things that are distinct, possess different properties, are measured in different units, are incommensurable” and reduces them to “a numerical relationship” in which they are measured by way of a general equivalent, thereby “mak[ing] them commensurable.” In order to foster a world of boundless exchangeability, capitalism flattens difference into equivalence, making singularity into commensurability. In the place of capital’s commons of equivalence, communism calls for a commons of incommensurability: a sphere of relation structured less by the flat social fictions of possession, equality, and equivalence, than by a mode of sharing out, just redistribution, and being together in racial and sexual particularity. You located the communism of incommensurability in the work of, and relationship between. Eve Sedgwick and Gary Fisher: I use the term “communism” to help us think a certain communing of in­ commensurable singularities that can be enacted through even imper­sonal sex. But I also mean just plain communism. But let me be more exact, by “just plain communism” I do not mean to invoke the communism of a mythical society of equals, but, instead, the communism of living within a sense of the commons, a living in common----- Communism is first and foremost about the precondition for emancipation. But emancipa­tion from what, we might ask? Here we come to understand emancipation as freedom from historical forces that dull or diminish our sense of the world. Nancy points out that Marx himself argued that the commune was the antithesis of empire. Communism would therefore be antithetical to our inner and outer colonialism, those blockages that disallow our arrival at an actual sense of the world, which is the world as a plurality of senses. By placing decolonial praxis and minoritarian emancipation at the cen­ter of your conceptualization of communism, this conception of the communism of incommensurability calls for a form of being-with, in difference and discord” where racial and sexual differences are not extin­guished, but shared out with each other: “This commons, this experience of being-in-common-in-difference, offers [us] a map of life where sin­gularities flow into the common, enacting a necessary communism. Communism being necessary, here, because it labors to sustain freedom and More Life for queer and trans people of color. Minoritarian perfor­mance can be, as it was for those few flickering moments of Bustamante’s scream, the means through which this “necessary communism” shifts from mere ideality to (albeit ephemeral) reality. Performance, like communism, like the party, is an ephemeral, tem­porary happening in which singular beings crash into each other for a time to become a being singular plural. But then the dawn breaks, the performance ends, the party comes undone, and they slip away from each other, falling back into the void. The party is the communism of incommensurability where, as Siouxsie described it, an “aura of sadness abounds [in] you” but gives way to being-with and being together-in­ difference, where the past isn’t lost, the future isn’t foreclosed, and the present is the presence of infinite, boundless, and renewable life. For Nancy, this is “the condition of the ever-renewed present.” And for you, it was, and was akin to, performance: “This potentiality is always in the horizon and, like performance, never completely disappears, but instead, lingers and serves as a conduit for knowing and feeling other people.” What allows the party, or a performance, to serve the will to­ ward freedom and More Life is that another night beckons and that it can happen again. And again. And again. At first, after you died, I couldn’t find you. I wandered the halls look­ing for you. I screamed out your name but you did not come. And then you started to return: in the songs that you used to listen to, the things you wrote, the books you read, art you adored, sometimes in dreams, and most of all in the company of the people you loved. Throwing par­ties was a way of performing your resurrection, even if, like a performance, your return was always ephemeral or impermanent. You took a part of us with you when you died. Like the parties we threw, I wrote this to bring you back. This book is about minoritarian subjects who keep each other alive, mobilizing performance to open up the possibility for new worlds and new ways of being in the world together. I wrote it for the other ones who are lost, left behind, and living in the breakdown, but it is addressed to you, in particular, because in spite of the mundanity and ubiquity of queer and trans of color death, each of those deaths remains singular, particular, and personal for those of us who live in the wake of them. We can never forget that. To write a book about minoritarian death, survival, and freedom (which was also to write a book about queer of color grief, fife, and insurgency) is always to write about the particular, singular people (like you) whom we have loved and lost. I wrote this book for you. And I wrote it to keep some part of you alive and with me (with us) in order to take you with us to the various battles that we will wage in your name—and in our own.

### 1AR – AT: Alt Black Femophobia

#### There’s a Black femmephobia DA to their organizing – it’s dangerous for black women

**Johnson 9**(Connie Johnson, Doctoral Student at UT Austin, vol. 22, no. 1, Fall 2008-Spring 2009 Issue title: Politics and Performativity, Reclaiming Claudia Jones: When a Black Feminist Marxist Defies McCarthyism)//KM https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text- idx?cc=mfsfront;c=mfs;c=mfsfront;idno=ark5583.0022.102;rgn=main;view=text;xc=1;g=mfsg

Jones articulated the oppression of racism that denied black women full participation in the labor force because of their skin color. Jones also “believed that white Communist workers had a special responsibility to support the black women’s [own] autonomous struggles because they inevitably resisted race, class, and gender exploitation and thereby took aim against the whole capitalist system”(Weigand 2001: 106). What Davies’ documents in her text as the exploitation of black women workers, Marx further defines in *Capital* (1867) when he outlines the paradox of capitalistic profits that are extracted from the labor of an exploited proletariat. [[3]](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mfsfront/ark5583.0022.102/--reclaiming-claudia-jones-when-a-black-feminist-marxist?c=mfs;c=mfsfront;g=mfsg;id=N3;note=ptr;rgn=main;view=trgt;xc=1) Although Vladimir Lenin speaks “of the enslavement of women within the social and economic structures that restrict them to domestic labor,” certainly neither Marx nor Lenin had “the historical context [in which] to argue for the gendered black subject” (Davies 2007: 3). Here, one must consider the dilemma of the gendered black worker who, though not a slave, must operate and perform the same tasks as her white counterpart, but at a lesser wage. Jones took Marx’s hypothesis one step further in respect to women of color: not only were they exploited, but they were doubly exploited. Even when they were allowed to participate in the work force, the type of work they were allotted was usually inferior to that of whites and the wages always substantially lower (Greenberg 1997: 23). The concept of superexploitation regarding black, working-class women is based upon Jones’ observation that black women “were the most oppressed stratum of the whole population” (41). As Davies suggests, during the Jim Crow era of the 1950s, black women were not only doubly but triply oppressed if one considers the role of labor unions. Primarily relegated to low-paying jobs as domestic servants, black women were not allowed to join trade unions or participate in the organized labor movement. Labor organizations eschewed the domestic worker from participation and thus “consigned these women—usually black women—to victimhood and exclusion from the normal social networks and labor legislation that benefited other workers; thus continuing their superexploitation” (Davies 2001: 44). Though the value and necessity of the African-American worker took on greater value within the context of the U.S. labor force following the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the onset of World War II, black women were restricted by the types of work they could engage in even during the war (Cobble 2005). Jones addresses this dilemma in an issue of *Political Affairs:* It is incumbent on the trade unions to assist the Domestic Workers Union in every possible way to accomplish the task of organizing the exploited domestic workers, the majority of whom are Negro women. Simultaneously, a legislative fight for the inclusion of domestic workers under the benefits of the Social Security Law is vitally urgent and necessary (Jones 1949: 34-35). [[4]](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mfsfront/ark5583.0022.102/--reclaiming-claudia-jones-when-a-black-feminist-marxist?c=mfs;c=mfsfront;g=mfsg;id=N4;note=ptr;rgn=main;view=trgt;xc=1) It was much more difficult to confront inequalities within the Communist Party than outside it. For example, though Maida Kemp, another Caribbean or Afro-Panamanian, would rise to power by confronting the International Ladies’ Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) for not admitting blacks and Puerto Ricans into the Italian Dress and Waistmakers’ Union Local 89 in 1947, this same sense of rage did not manifest itself in a similar fashion within the Communist Party (Hapke 2004: 89), however, when one considers Claudia Jones fate. Though both Kemp and Jones were women of color, fighting for women’s rights in New York during roughly the same time period, each experienced acutely different results. While Kemp would become a board member of the ILGWU and run for political office during the 1950s, Jones would be exiled to Britain in 1955, reviled and forgotten by the American and British governments. This reaction may have as much to do with the fact that while Kemp’s actions embraced efforts that improved or enhanced capitalism (e.g., raising wages for garment workers, thus, theoretically, streamlining and enhancing production of goods for management and the owners), Jones’ efforts did not. Jones’ deportation may instead be interpreted as American capitalism’s final act to eliminate to the *negative surplus labor* (e.g., removing Claudia Jones from the workforce itself) that threatened the existing socioeconomic system. By virtue of deportation to another country, Jones was being removed and subtracted from the labor pool, not only as a potential worker, but from the U.S. economy as well. As an outspoken Marxist who challenged capitalism, Jones became a liability. She was no longer useful and thus had to be eliminated. Jones’ criticisms and opinions, both in reference to the Communist Party and the roles of women, which were voiced well before both the civil rights and feminist movements of Betty Friedan’s [[5]](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mfsfront/ark5583.0022.102/--reclaiming-claudia-jones-when-a-black-feminist-marxist?c=mfs;c=mfsfront;g=mfsg;id=N5;note=ptr;rgn=main;view=trgt;xc=1) era, signifies a sense of postmodern thought that was clearly antithetical to the expectations of women during her era. Though not in complete agreement with all of his views, Jones’ impassioned obsession with the rights of workers is reminiscent of Louis Althusser’s own critique of Marx’s *Capital.* Jones was cognizant of the interdependency that existed between social capital and labor or the workers themselves. In his text, *For Marx* (1965), Althusser speaks of the “contradiction” and subsequent allowances that must be made to maintain the fluid relationship between the worker and the capitalist. Given that *For Marx* was first published in France in 1965 [[6]](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mfsfront/ark5583.0022.102/--reclaiming-claudia-jones-when-a-black-feminist-marxist?c=mfs;c=mfsfront;g=mfsg;id=N6;note=ptr;rgn=main;view=trgt;xc=1) amidst the political turmoil of the civil rights movement in the U.S., Althusser’s discussion of “contradictions” might be seen as the antagonism that existed between workers, plus the added antagonism or friction between workers of different genders and then racial groups. Mark Poster (1974) emphasizes Althusser’s critique of Marx as failing to address the *alienated labor* factor in his text (393). More importantly, though, as it relates to our discussion of Jones’ interpretation of the triple oppression that black women suffered in the United States as victims of racial segregation, Althusser also takes into consideration the economic politics inherent in labor while Marx did not. According to Althusser “the fact that Marx accepts political *economy precisely as it presents* itself without questioning the content of its concepts or their systematicity as he was to do later on” (Althusser 1969: 159) speaks to his failure to separate economic ideology from economic reality. Marx’s abstractions of the political economy and the working class did not take into account race and gender. One wonders if Althusser’s “alienated labor” might be a reference to marginalized workers or those denied participation in the production cycle of the working class—citizens like Claudia Jones and millions like her who desperately wanted to be a part of and contribute to that working class. The first volume of *Capital* was published in 1867; almost one hundred years later, Althusser’s *On Marx*was written. The irony, here, is that though both texts address the plight of the working class, they leave a void as to the true identity of that working class. Trying to fill that void during the 1940s in a segregated United States might seem illogical for a black woman, but for Jones, it was not. In analyzing Jones as a black feminist Marxist, using a Hegelian lens to interpret her activism may be particularly effective, given Hegel’s discussion of the inequality that existed between workers and the production or labor that the capitalists demanded. Though **Marx’s** *Capital* tells us that the worker must operate under the tyranny of the capitalist, he does not take into account that an even greater threat to the working class is not poverty but, more crucially, alienation. Paul Ashton reflects on Hegel’s ability to discern this inviolable relationship between labor and the society in which one must operate: This is because he recognizes that when '[c]ivil society is in a state of unimpeded activity,' not in a state of chaos or some unusual situation that poverty arises. The labourer is likely to be thrown into a state of poverty of both mind and body when all is well in civil society. The problem for Hegel is obviously that he has envisaged a necessary stage of self-conscious development that has a natural disposition towards poverty, and 'that the modern state cannot within itself provide the answer to one of its own self-generated problems.' [[7]](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mfsfront/ark5583.0022.102/--reclaiming-claudia-jones-when-a-black-feminist-marxist?c=mfs;c=mfsfront;g=mfsg;id=N7;note=ptr;rgn=main;view=trgt;xc=1) During the pre-civil rights era of the 1960s, both of poverty and alienation were particularly acute for African-Americans who lived in a “civil” society that refused them entry into the working class for even the most contemptible jobs. Given that blacks were not encouraged to be active in the mainstream labor force during the 1940s in the United States and lived in a society where Jim Crow segregation was the norm, the inequalities that Hegel identifies become acutely more salient. In his *Philosophy of Right* (1820)*,* Hegel also describes production and labor within the framework of wealth and civic engagement and the inherent inequality that it creates. If the spirit and talents of the worker are stymied or restricted by a particularly onerous capitalistic system where the owner does not allow the worker to perform or engage in the production itself, an imbalance will exist: “On the contrary, it produces inequality out of spirit and exalts it to an inequality of talents, wealth, and intellectual and moral education” (Hegel 1820: 164). In many ways, one might consider Jones’ efforts and activism in the Communist Party during the 1940s as a tactic or method for restoring this equality, or sense of balance in the system. Hegel argues that man seeks to balance that inequality of “co-operation involved in labour” by “seeking satisfaction of the wants of all others (*ibid.*). Though Jones’ own efforts were met with FBI surveillance, imprisonment and indifference, she strove to achieve this “balance” that Hegel describes by striving, albeit unsuccessfully, to “fit” into both capitalism’s hegemony and the CP itself. In weighing the merits of Althusser’s and Hegel’s premise of “irrationality” or alienated labor, one should also consider the precarious location of Jones within a political context. Jones’ failure to obtain citizenship and thus gain a real identity in either Trinidad, the U.S., or Great Britain could be interpreted as reflective of a surplus labor construct where the labor, or work, is neither accounted for nor welcome. Though an unwanted or unwelcome labor that is dismissed both within a capitalistic framework as well as a Communistic framework is certainly grounds for the hypothesis of “irrationality” or an alienated labor, it also brings into question whether or not blacks should have been a part of the Marxist equation at all. As social constructs, both race and racism complicate Marxism in the sense that not only is there an oppressor (the capitalist or owner) and an oppressed (the working class), but there is also the impediment of race added to the equation. If the working class is comprised of two different racial groups who have been socialized or taught to believe that one group is superior to the other, an antagonism develops. The owner or capitalist can take advantage of this antagonism by pitting one group against the other. Certainly, Karl Marx never took into account Jim Crow segregation in his writings on Marxism, given that he assumed a homogeneous population in Eastern Europe. But as a black woman, Jones probably saw Marxism as the great equalizer; a socialist framework that could level the playing field for both blacks and whites alike. Unfortunately, Jones could not foresee or predict that racism would prevail, sidelining all her attempts to enlighten or instill any tangible social change among blacks or whites during her lifetime

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#### Our interpretation is that affirmatives must defend hypothetical implementation of federal government action contextual to the resolution.

#### They violate:

#### ‘United States’ is the federal government.

**Mitchell ’15** [Paul; Founder of the Supreme Law Firm. Former Vice President for Legal Affairs and Counsel to an Arizona Trust. Private Attorney General. Criminal Investigator. MS and BA. “U.S. vs. U.S.A.” http://www.supremelaw.org/letters/us-v-usa.htm] TDI

Note also that those Articles clearly distinguished "United States of America" from "United States" in Congress assembled. The States formally delegated certain powers to the federal government, which is clearly identified in those Articles as the "United States". Therefore, the "United States of America" now refer to the 50 States of the Union, and the term "United States" refers to the federal government. The term "United States" is the term that is used consistently now throughout Title 28 to refer to the federal government domiciled in D.C. There is only ONE PLACE in all of Title 28 where the term "United States of America" is used, and there it is used in correct contradistinction to "United States": http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/28/1746.html Because Title 28 contains statutes which govern all federal courts, the consistent use of "United States" to refer to the federal government carries enormous weight. Title 28 is the latest word on this subject, as revised, codified and enacted into positive law on June 25, 1948. Moreover, the Supremacy Clause elevates Title 28 to the status of supreme Law of the Land.

#### ‘Economic sanctions’ are restrictions on trade, travel and access to financial assets. They can be partial or total.

Metych ’23 [Michelle; M.A., DePaul University, B.A., Southeast Missouri State University. “economic sanctions.” https://www.britannica.com/topic/economic-sanctions] TDI

Economic sanctions, restrictions, including those on trade, travel, and access to financial assets, imposed by a national government upon another government, an organization, or an individual for the purpose of compelling or preventing certain actions or policies on the part of the targeted entity or individual. Economic sanctions against governments usually involve the partial or total suspension of preexisting trade relations. They may include but are not limited to asset freezes and seizures, export and import restrictions, travel bans, and arms embargoes. Economic sanctions are a common government response to challenges posed by armed conflicts, terrorism, human rights violations, drug smuggling, and other criminal or objectionable activities. Economic sanctions are often invoked as a first response to such challenges, because they can be levied in situations where military operations would be impossible or undesirable. They are also relatively inexpensive to implement and can be put in place quickly.

#### Two impacts -

#### Fairness – their interpretation disincentives comprehensive negative prep in favor of taking the moral high ground – that weakens the overall content of debates and creates a moral hazard in which debaters weaponize narratives of violence to get the ballot

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#### heg is sustainable

Brands 18 (Hal Brands – Johns Hopkins University Global Affairs Distinguished Professor and Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments Senior Fellow, January 16, 2018, “American Grand Strategy in the Age of Trump”, Brookings Institution Press, pg. 11-16,)

Yet if this narrative is not baseless, it is overstated. For the idea that the era of American primacy has passed—that we are now entering or have already entered a truly multipolar world—is far from the truth. By virtually all key measures, the United States still has substantial, even massive, leads over its closest competitors. In 2016 the United States claimed a nearly US$18.6 trillion GDP that was almost US$7.5 trillion larger than China’s, and it possessed a per capita GDP (a crucial measure of how much money a government can extract from its citizens to pursue geopolitical ends) roughly four times that of China. In the military realm, U.S. annual defense spending was still nearly three times that of China as of 2015—a reminder that although China is closing the gap on Washington in certain respects, the overall gap remains significant indeed.25 In fact, America’s global lead is probably far bigger than indicated by simple numerical measures such as GDP and percentage of global military spending. GDP is a commonly used but problematic way of comparing U.S. and Chinese economic strength. It is merely a snapshot, rather than a fully explanatory measure of how wealth accrues over time; it does not account for factors such as the damage that China is doing to its own long-term economic potential through the devastation of its natural environment; it understates important U.S. advantages such as the fact that American citizens own significant minority shares in foreign corporations. By a more holistic measure of national economic strength—“inclusive wealth,” which takes account of manufactured capital, human capital, and natural capital—the United States was still roughly 4.5 times wealthier than China as recently as 2010. Add in the enormous long-term economic problems that China faces—from declining growth rates, to a massive asset bubble, to a rapidly aging population—and forecasts of coming Chinese economic supremacy become more tenuous still.26 The U.S. military lead is even more extensive. As a recent study by Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth concludes, although China’s ongoing military buildup presents significant, even severe, regional challenges for the United States, at the global level there is still simply no comparison. The United States possesses massive advantages in high-end power-projection capabilities such as aircraft carriers, fourth- and fifth-generation tactical aircraft, nuclear-powered submarines, AWACS, and heavy unmanned aerial vehicles. These advantages have been amassed over decades, through enormous and accumulating investments, and so it will take decades—if not longer—for China to come close to matching the United States. These metrics, moreover, do not reflect the other, more intangible advantages that the U.S. military possesses—the years of recent experience in complex operations, the extraordinarily high levels of human capital, the flexible command-and-control structures that permit initiative and adaptation. “Rather than expecting a power transition in international politics,” Brooks and Wohlforth write, “everyone should start getting used to a world in which the United States remains the sole superpower for decades to come.”27 Finally, any consideration of global power dynamics must evaluate the role of allies: the United States has dozens of them, whereas China and Russia have few, if any. (Those that they do have, countries such as Belarus and North Korea, make up a veritable international most-wanted list.) America’s allies give it geopolitical leverage, diplomatic influence, and military access that other countries can only envy; they add enormously to the overall weight of the Western coalition of which Washington remains leader. As of 2015, the United States and its core treaty allies in Asia and Europe accounted for roughly three-fifths of global wealth and global military spending—a share that was moderately diminished from twenty years earlier, but still very impressive by nearly all other historical comparisons.

#### the aff causes bandwagoning and shreds deterrence – results in global retrenchment

Mazarr 20 (Michael J. Mazarr – RAND Corporation senior political scientist, former U.S. National War College professor, Henry L. Stimson Center president, Center for Strategic and International Studies senior fellow, Capitol Hill senior defense aide, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff special assistant, June 16, 2020, “Rethinking Restraint: Why It Fails in Practice”, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2020.1771042>,

These dilemmas show up most of all in the way in which some restraint proponents handle the issue of China. Given Chinese regional ambitions, predatory behavior, and coercion of its neighbors, there is a strong argument that the United States cannot pull back—militarily or otherwise—and effectively compete. The problem is especially acute in Asia because of the likely effect of China’s overwhelming power on the calculations of others: countries in the region are urgently looking for evidence of credible US commitments. Without that evidence, many could end up deciding that they have no alternative but to appease, rather than balance, Chinese demands. Despite these concerns, some restraint proponents remain willing to include Asia in their retrenchment agenda. Yet, many leading advocates of restraint disagree and accept that deterring China must be a major exception to the general principle of retrenchment. Mearsheimer and Walt, for example, note that China “is likely to seek hegemony in Asia,” that local powers are too dispersed and weak to offer an effective counter, and that the United States will therefore have to “throw its considerable weight behind” a balancing effort.86 Andrew Bacevich appears to agree.87 This admission is welcome—but it blows a massive hole in the case for restraint. A serious US effort to contest Chinese hegemony will demand significant and growing regional presence in an operationally demanding theater. It will likely require continued US troop deployments in Japan and Korea, deep engagement including extensive security cooperation activities with regional partners, and major financial commitments to counter Chinese economic statecraft. In sum, if the United States intends to balance Chinese power, it is not clear how restrained it will be able to be. The global outline of restraint would begin to look not unlike a supercharged version of the “rebalance to Asia” announced by the Obama administration, with reduced posture in the Middle East and Europe but a renewed commitment to the Indo-Pacific region. If that is all restraint amounts to in the most geopolitically significant region in the world, it would not imply much of a change. The dilemmas the China case creates for the restraint agenda come out clearly in Posen’s analysis. He suggests that, in theory, retrenchment in Asia might work out fine—but “out of an abundance of caution … the United States ought not to run this experiment.” In Asia, he concludes, “the locals may need the United States, and the United States may need the locals.” Washington should, therefore, play a balancing role to prevent Chinese regional hegemony.88 But somehow, Posen then goes on to suggest that the United States should sever its two major alliances in Northeast Asia—with Japan and Korea— without, it seems, entirely distancing itself from their security. He would “renegotiate” the US-Japan treaty and shift the “responsibility” for defense in Korea to Seoul, slashing US force levels in both places.89 He does not suggest, though, that the United States could stand by if China or North Korea were to threaten either country. If Washington is committed to regional balancing as he implies, it surely could not, and presumably this is what Posen has in mind by the “locals may need the United States.” But if the United States would still come to their rescue, why abrogate the security treaties and tempt China and North Korea to think they could get away with aggression in the first place? Along the way, Posen makes a general reference to “going slow” on disengagement from Asia;90 but if China’s power is rising, not falling, US investments in the region will be on precisely the opposite trajectory. China’s leading tools for achieving regional hegemony make this dilemma even more acute. Beijing aims to pursue its goals, not through expansionist wars, but via a gradual process of incremental territorial claims, direct coercion, region-wide economic statecraft, influence-seeking in specific societies, and an increasingly muscular information campaign.91 US detachment from Asia would clear the way for Beijing to succeed through these “gray zone” techniques, both by thinning out the direct physical barriers to China’s tactics and by weakening the resolve of countries ensnared in these thickening webs of Chinese power. In a strategic competition dominated by activities below the threshold of major conflict, to be missing from a region is to be absent from the competition. Competing and balancing effectively demands persistent engagement of the sort that restraint would largely forfeit.

#### culminates in nuclear war between great powers

Grygiel and Mitchell 16 (Jakub Grygiel – Center for European Policy Analysis Senior Fellow Johns Hopkins University IR professor, and Princeton University PhD and A. Wess Mitchell – Center for European Policy Analysis president, former National Center for Policy Analysis research associate, Richard G. Lugar Institute for Diplomacy and Congress, the Slovak Atlantic Commission, the Prague Center for Transatlantic Relations, and the Atlantic Initiative advisory council member, and Free University of Berlin PhD, February 12, 2016, “Predators on the Frontier”, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/02/12/predators-on-the-frontier/>,

Revisionist powers are on the move. ‎From eastern Ukraine and the Persian Gulf to the South China Sea, large rivals of the United States are modernizing their military forces, grabbing strategic real estate, and threatening vulnerable U.S. allies. Their goal is not just to assert hegemony over their neighborhoods but to rearrange the global security order as we have known it since the end of the Second World War. We first wrote about these emerging dynamics in 2010, and then in TAI in 2011. We argued three things. First, that revisionist powers were using a strategy of “probing”: a combination of assertive diplomacy and small but bold military actions to test the outer reaches of American power and in particular the resilience of frontier allies. Second, we argued that the small, exposed allies who were the targets of these probes were likely to respond by developing back-up options to U.S. security guarantees, whether through military self-help or accommodation. And third, we argued that that China and Russia were learning from one another’s probes in their respective regions, and that allies themselves were drawing conclusions about U.S. deterrence in their own neighborhood from how America handled similarly situated allies elsewhere. Five years later, as we argue in a new book released this month, these dynamics have intensified dramatically. Revisionist powers are indeed probing the United States, but their methods have become bolder, more violent—and successful. Allies have grown more alert to this pressure, amid the steady whittling away of neighboring buffer zones, and have begun to pursue an array of self-help schemes ranging from arms build-ups to flirtations with the nearby revisionist power. It has become harder for the United States to isolate security crises to one region: Russia’s land-grabs in Eastern Europe provide both a model and distraction effect for China to accelerate its maritime claims in the South China Sea; Poland’s quest for U.S. strategic reassurance unnerves and spurs allies in the Persian Gulf and Western Pacific. By degrees, the world is entering the path to war. Not since the 1980s have the conditions been riper for a major international military crisis. Not since the 1930s has the world witnessed the emergence of multiple large, predatory states determined to revise the global order to their advantage—if necessary by force. At a minimum, the United States in coming years could face the pressure of managing several deteriorating regional security spirals; at a maximum, it could be confronted with a Great Power war against one, and possibly two or even three, nuclear-armed peer competitors. In either case, the U.S. military could face these scenarios without either the presumption of technological overmatch or favorable force ratios that it has enjoyed against its rivals for the past several decades. How should the United States respond to these dynamics? As our rivals grow more aggressive and our military edge narrows, we must look to other methods for waging and winning geopolitical competitions in the 21st century. The most readily available but underutilized tool at our disposal is alliances. America’s frontline allies offer a mechanism by which it can contain rivals—indeed, this was the original purpose for cultivating security linkages with small states in the world’s rimland regions to begin with. In coming years, the value of strategically placed allies near Eurasia’s large land powers will grow as our relative technological or numerical military strength shrinks. The time has come for the United States to develop a grand strategy for containing peer competitors centered on the creative use of frontline allies. It must do so now, before geopolitical competition intensifies. Predatory Peers Probing has been the strategy of choice for America’s modern rivals to challenge the existing order. Over the past few years, Russia, China, and, to a degree, Iran have sensed that the United States is retreating in their respective regions—whether out of choice, fatigue, weakness, or all three combined. But they are unsure of how much remaining strength the United States has, or of the solidity of its commitments to allies. Rather than risking direct war, they have employed low-intensity crises to test U.S. power in these regions. Like past revisionists, they have focused their probes on seemingly secondary interests of the leading power, either by humbling its weakest allies or seizing gray zones over which the United States is unlikely to fight. These probes test the United States on the outer rim of its influence, where the revisionist’s own interests are strongest while the U.S. is at its furthest commitments and therefore most vulnerable to defeat. Russia has launched a steady sequence of threatening military moves against vulnerable NATO allies and conducted limited offensives against former Soviet satellite states. China has sought out low-intensity diplomatic confrontations with small U.S. security clients, erected military no-go zones, and asserted claims over strategic waterways. When we wrote about this behavior in The American Interest in 2011, it was composed mainly of aggressive diplomacy or threatening but small military moves. But the probes of U.S. rivals are becoming bolder. Sensing a window of opportunity, in 2014 Russia upped the ante by invading Ukraine—the largest country in Eastern Europe—in a war that has so far cost 7,000 lives and brought 52,000 square kilometers of territory into the Russian sphere of influence. After years of using unmarked fishing trawlers to harass U.S. or allied naval vessels, China has begun to militarize its probes in the South China Sea, constructing seven artificial islands and claiming (and threatening to fight over) 1.8 million square kilometers of ocean. Iran has recently humiliated the United States by holding American naval vessels and broadcasting photos of surrendering U.S. sailors. In all cases, revisionist powers increased the stakes because they perceived their initial probes to have succeeded. Having achieved modest gains, they increased the intensity of their probes. The strategic significance of these latest probes for the United States is twofold. First, they have substantially increased the military pressure on frontline allies. The presence of a buffer zone of some sort, whether land or sea, between allies like Poland or Japan and neighboring revisionist powers, helped to reduce the odds of sustained contact and confrontation between allied and rival militaries. By successfully encroaching on or invading these middle spaces, revisionists have advanced the zone of contest closer to the territory of U.S. allies, increasing the potential for a deliberate or accidental military clash. Second, the latest probes have significantly raised the overall pressure on the United States. As long as Russia’s military adventures were restricted to its own southern periphery, America could afford to shift resources to the Pacific without worrying much about the consequences in Europe—an important consideration given the Pentagon’s jettisoning of the goal to be able to fight a two-front war. With both Ukraine and the South China Sea at play (and with a chaotic Middle East, where another rival, Iran, advances its reach and influence), the United States no longer has the luxury of prioritizing one region over another; with two re-militarized frontiers at opposite ends of the globe, it must continually weigh trade-offs in scarce military resources between geographic theaters. This disadvantage is not lost on America’s rivals, or its most exposed friends. Frontier Frenzy The intensification of probing has reverberated through the ranks of America’s frontline allies. In both Europe and Asia, the edges of the Western order are inhabited by historically vulnerable small or mid-sized states that over the past seven decades have relied on the United States for their existence. The similarities in the geopolitical position and strategic options of states like Estonia and Taiwan, or Poland and South Korea, are striking. For all of these states, survival depends above all on the sustainability of U.S. extended deterrence, in both its nuclear and conventional forms. This in turn rests on two foundations: the assumption among rivals and allies alike that the United States is physically able to fulfill its security obligations to even the smallest ally, and the assumption that it is politically willing to do so. Doubts about both have been growing for many years. Reductions in American defense spending are weakening the U.S. military capability to protect allies. Due to cuts introduced by the 2009 Budget Control Act, the U.S. Navy is smaller than at any point since before the First World War, the U.S. Army is smaller than at any point since before the Second World War and the U.S. Air Force has the lowest number of operational warplanes in its history. Nuclear force levels are static or declining, and the U.S. technological edge over rivals in important weapons types has diminished. The Pentagon in 2009 announced that for the first time since the Second World War it would jettison the goal of being able to conduct a two-front global war. At the same time that U.S. capabilities are decreasing, those of our rivals are increasing. Both Russia and China have undertaken large, multiyear military expansion and modernization programs and the technological gap between them and the United States is narrowing, particularly in key areas such as short-range missiles, tactical nuclear weapons, and fifth-generation fighter aircraft. Recent American statecraft has compounded the problem by weakening the belief in U.S. political will to defend allies. The early Obama Administration’s public questioning of the value of traditional alliances as “alignments of nations rooted in the cleavages of a long-gone Cold War” shook allied confidence at the same time that its high-profile engagement with large rivals indicated a preference for big-power bargaining over the heads of small states. The U.S.-Russia “reset” seemed to many allies both transactional and freewheeling, and left a lasting impression of the suddenness with which U.S. priorities could shift from one Administration to the next. This undermined the predictability of patronage that is the sine qua non of effective deterrence for any Great Power. As the revisionists’ probes have become more assertive and U.S. credibility less firm, America’s frontier allies have started to reconsider their national security options. Five years ago, many frontline states expressed security concerns, began to seek greater military capabilities, or looked to offset risk by engaging diplomatically with revisionists. But for the most part, such behavior was muted and well within the bounds of existing alliance commitments. However, as probing has picked up pace, allied coping behavior has become more frantic. In Europe, Poland, the Baltic States, and Romania have initiated military spending increases. In Asia, littoral U.S. allies are engaged in a worrisome regional arms race. In both regions, the largest allies are considering offensive capabilities to create conventional deterrence. Their willingness to build up their indigenous military capabilities is overall a positive development, but it carries risks, too, spurring dynamics that were absent over the past decades. The danger is that, absent a consistent and credible U.S. overwatch, rearming allies engage in a chaotic acquisition strategy, poorly anchored in the larger alliance. Fearing abandonment, such states may end up detaching themselves from the alliance simply by pursuing independent security policies. There is also danger on the other side of the spectrum of possible responses by frontline allies. Contrary to the hopeful assumptions of offshore balancers, not all frontline allies are resisting. Some are choosing strategies of accommodation. Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia in Europe and Thailand and Malaysia in Asia are all examples of nominal U.S. allies that are trying to avoid antagonizing the stronger predator. Worsening regional security dynamics create domestic political pressures to avoid confrontation with the nearby revisionist power. Full-fledged bandwagoning in the form of the establishment of new alliances is not yet visible, but hedging is. Seeds of Disorder The combination of intensifying probes and fragmenting alliances threatens to unravel important components of the stability of major regions and the wider international order. Allowed to continue on their current path, security dynamics in Eastern Europe and the Western Pacific could lead to negative or even catastrophic outcomes for U.S. national security. One increasingly likely near-term scenario is a simmering, simultaneous security competition in major regions. In such a scenario, rivals continue probing allies and grabbing middle-zone territory while steering clear of war with the United States or its proxies; allies continue making half-measure preparations without becoming fully capable of managing their own security; and the United States continues feeding greater and greater resources into frontline regions without achieving reassurance, doggedly tested and put in doubt by the revisionists. Through a continued series of probes, the revisionist powers maintain the initiative while the United States and its allies play catch up. The result might be a gradual hardening of the U.S. security perimeter that never culminates in a Great Power war but generates many of the negative features of sustained security competition—arms races, proxy wars, and cyber and hybrid conflicts—that erode the bases of global economic growth. A second, graver possibility is war. Historically, a lengthy series of successful probes has often culminated in a military confrontation. One dangerous characteristic of today’s international landscape is that not one but two revisionists have now completed protracted sequences of probes that, from their perspective, have been successful. If the purpose of probing is to assess the top power’s strength, today’s probes could eventually convince either Russia, China, or both that the time is ripe for a more definitive contest. It is uncertain what the outcome would be. Force ratios in today’s two hotspots, the Baltic Sea and South China Sea, do not favor the United States. Both Russia and China possess significant anti-access/area denial (A2AD) capabilities, with a ten-to-one Russian troop advantage in the Baltic and massive Chinese preponderance of coastal short-range missiles in the South China Sea. Moreover, both powers possess nuclear weapons and, in Russia’s case, a doctrine favoring their escalatory use for strategic effect. And even if the United States can maintain overwhelming military superiority in a dyadic contest, war is always the realm of chance and a source of destruction that threatens the stability of the existing international order. Having failed a series of probes, the United States could face the prospect of either a short, sharp war that culminates in nuclear attack or an economically costly protracted two-front conflict. Either outcome would definitely alter the U.S.-led international system as we know it. A third, long-term possibility is a gradual eviction of the United States from the rimland regions. This could occur either through a military defeat, as described above, or through the gradual hollowing out of U.S. regional alliances due to the erosion of deterrence and alliance defection—and therefore this scenario is not mutually exclusive of the previous two. For the United States, this would be geopolitically disastrous, involving a loss of position in the places where America must be present to prevent the risk of hemispheric isolation. Gaining a foothold in the Eurasian rimlands has been a major, if not the most important, goal of U.S. grand strategy for a century. It is through this presence that the United States is able to shape global politics and avoid the emergence of mortal threats to itself. Without such a presence, America’s largest rivals would be able to steadily aggrandize, building up enlarged spheres of influence, territory, and resources that would render them capable of sustained competition for global primacy. Unlike in the 20th century, current A2AD and nuclear technology would make a military reentry into these regions difficult if not impossible.

#### nuclear war causes extinction

Starr 14 ---- Steven, Senior Scientist for Physicians for Social Responsibility, Director of the Clinical Laboratory Science Program (Missouri), commentator in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and the Strategic Arms Reduction, Associate member of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, “The Lethality of Nuclear Weapons: Nuclear War has No Winner,” Global Research: Centre for Research on Globalization, 6/5, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-lethality-of-nuclear-weapons-nuclear-war-has-no-winner/5385611> \*\*Modified for language

Nuclear war has no winner. Beginning in 2006, several of the world’s leading climatologists (at Rutgers, UCLA, John Hopkins University, and the University of Colorado-Boulder) published a series of studies that evaluated the long-term environmental consequences of a nuclear war, including baseline scenarios fought with merely 1% of the explosive power in the US and/or Russian launch-ready nuclear arsenals. They concluded that the consequences of even a “small” nuclear war would include catastrophic disruptions of global climate[i] and massive destruction of Earth’s protective ozone layer[ii]. These and more recent studies predict that global agriculture would be so negatively affected by such a war, a global famine would result, which would cause up to 2 billion people to starve to death. [iii]¶ These peer-reviewed studies – which were analyzed by the best scientists in the world and found to be without error – also predict that a war fought with less than half of US or Russian strategic nuclear weapons would destroy the human race.[iv] In other words, a US-Russian nuclear war would create such extreme long-term damage to the global environment that it would leave the Earth uninhabitable for humans and most animal forms of life.¶ A recent article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, “Self-assured destruction: The climate impacts of nuclear war”,[v] begins by stating:¶ “A nuclear war between Russia and the United States, even after the arsenal reductions planned under New START, could produce a nuclear winter. Hence, an attack by either side could be suicidal, resulting in self-assured destruction.”¶ In 2009, I wrote an article[vi] for the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament that summarizes the findings of these studies. It explains that nuclear firestorms would produce millions of tons of smoke, which would rise above cloud level and form a global stratospheric smoke layer that would rapidly encircle the Earth. The smoke layer would remain for at least a decade, and it would act to destroy the protective ozone layer (vastly increasing the UV-B reaching Earth[vii]) as well as block warming sunlight, thus creating Ice Age weather conditions that would last 10 years or longer.¶ Following a US-Russian nuclear war, temperatures in the central US and Eurasia would fall below freezing every day for one to three years; the intense cold would completely eliminate growing seasons for a decade or longer. No crops could be grown, leading to a famine that would kill most humans and large animal populations.¶ Electromagnetic pulse from high-altitude nuclear detonations would destroy the integrated circuits in all modern electronic devices[viii], including those in commercial nuclear power plants. Every nuclear reactor would almost instantly meltdown; every nuclear spent fuel pool (which contain many times more radioactivity than found in the reactors) would boil-off, releasing vast amounts of long-lived radioactivity. The fallout would make most of the US and Europe uninhabitable. Of course, the survivors of the nuclear war would be starving to death anyway. Once nuclear weapons were introduced into a US-Russian conflict, there would be little chance that a ~~nuclear holocaust~~ [extinction] could be avoided. Theories of “limited nuclear war” and “nuclear de-escalation” are unrealistic.[ix] In 2002 the Bush administration modified US strategic doctrine from a retaliatory role to permit preemptive nuclear attack; in 2010, the Obama administration made only incremental and miniscule changes to this doctrine, leaving it essentially unchanged. Furthermore, Counterforce doctrine – used by both the US and Russian military – emphasizes the need for preemptive strikes once nuclear war begins. Both sides would be under immense pressure to launch a preemptive nuclear first-strike once military hostilities had commenced, especially if nuclear weapons had already been used on the battlefield.

#### unipolarity is good and alliances are key – the alternative is worse

Brands 18 (Hal Brands – Johns Hopkins University Global Affairs Distinguished Professor and Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments Senior Fellow **citing** Robert Gilprin – Princeton University Politics and International Affair professor emeritus, January 16, 2018, “American Grand Strategy in the Age of Trump”, Brookings Institution Press, pg. 41-47,)

The fundamental reason is that both U.S. influence and international stability are thoroughly interwoven with America’s robust forward presence. Regarding influence, the protection that the United States has afforded its allies has equally afforded Washington great sway over those allies’ policies. “The more U.S. troops are stationed in a country,” one statistical analysis finds, “the more closely that country’s foreign policy orientation aligns with that of the United States.”48 During the Cold War and after, for instance, the United States has used the influence provided by its security posture to veto allies’ pursuit of nuclear weapons, to obtain more advantageous terms in financial and trade agreements, and even to affect the composition of allied nations’ governments.49 More broadly, America has used its alliances as vehicles for shaping political, security, and economic agendas in key regions and bilateral relationships, thus giving the United States an outsized voice on a range of important issues. To be clear, this influence has never been as pervasive as U.S. officials might like or as some observers might imagine. But by any reasonable standard of comparison, it has nonetheless been remarkable. One can tell a similar story about the relative stability of the postwar order. As even some leading offshore balancers have acknowledged, the lack of conflict in regions such as Europe in recent decades is not something that has occurred naturally. It has occurred because the “American pacifier” has suppressed precisely the dynamics that previously fostered geopolitical turmoil. That pacifier has limited arms races and security competitions by providing the protection that allows other countries to underbuild their militaries. It has soothed historical rivalries by affording a climate of security in which powerful countries such as Germany and Japan could be revived economically and reintegrated into thriving and fairly cooperative regional orders. It has induced caution in the behavior of allies and adversaries alike, deterring aggression and dissuading other destabilizing behavior. As John Mearsheimer has noted, the United States “effectively acts as a night watchman,” lending order to an otherwise disorderly and anarchical environment.50 What would happen if Washington backed away from this role? The most logical answer is that both U.S. influence and global stability would suffer. With respect to influence, the United States would effectively be surrendering the most powerful bargaining chip it has traditionally wielded in dealing with friends and allies, and jeopardizing the position of leadership it has used to shape bilateral and regional agendas for decades. The consequences would seem no less damaging where stability is concerned. As offshore balancers have argued, it may be that U.S. retrenchment would force local powers to spend more on defense, while perhaps assuaging certain points of friction with countries that feel threatened or encircled by U.S. presence. But it equally stands to reason that removing the American pacifier would liberate the more destabilizing influences that U.S. policy had previously stifled. Long-dormant security competitions might reawaken as countries armed themselves more vigorously; historical antagonisms between old rivals might reemerge in the absence of a robust U.S. presence and the reassurance it provides. Moreover, countries that seek to revise existing regional orders in their favor—think Russia in Europe, or China in Asia—might indeed applaud U.S. retrenchment, but they might just as plausibly feel empowered to more assertively press their interests. If the United States has been a kind of Leviathan in key regions, Mearsheimer acknowledges, then “take away that Leviathan and there is likely to be big trouble.”51 Scanning the global horizon today, one can easily see where such trouble might arise. In Europe, a revisionist Russia is already destabilizing its neighbors and contesting the post–Cold War settlement in the region. In the Gulf and the broader Middle East, the threat of Iranian ascendancy has stoked regionwide tensions manifesting in proxy wars and an incipient arms race, even as that region also contends with a severe threat to its stability in the form of the Islamic State and other jihadist groups. In East Asia, a rising China is challenging the regional status quo in numerous ways, sounding alarms among its neighbors—many of whom also have historical grievances against each other. In these circumstances, removing the American pacifier would likely yield not low-cost stability, but increased conflict and upheaval. That conflict and upheaval, in turn, would be quite damaging to U.S. interests even if it did not result in the nightmare scenario of a hostile power dominating a key region. It is hard to imagine, for instance, that increased instability and acrimony would conduce to the robust multilateral cooperation necessary to deal with transnational threats ranging from pandemics to piracy. More problematic still might be the economic consequences. As Michael Mandelbaum has argued, the enormous progress toward global prosperity and integration that has occurred since World War II (and now the Cold War) has come in the climate of relative stability and security provided largely by the United States.52 One cannot confidently predict that this progress would endure and continue amid escalating geopolitical competition in regions of enormous importance to the world economy. Perhaps the greatest risk that a strategy of offshore balancing would run, of course, is that a key region might not be able to maintain its own balance following U.S. retrenchment. That prospect might have seemed far-fetched in the early post–Cold War era. But in East Asia today, the rise and growing assertiveness of China have highlighted the medium- to long-term danger that a hostile power could in fact gain regional primacy. If China’s economy continues to grow rapidly, and if Beijing continues to increase military spending significantly, then its neighbors will ultimately face grave challenges in containing Chinese power even if they join forces in that endeavor. This possibility, ironically, is one to which leading advocates of retrenchment have been attuned. “The United States will have to play a key role in countering China,” Mearsheimer writes, “because its Asian neighbors are not strong enough to do it by themselves.”53 If this is true, however, then offshore balancing becomes a dangerous and potentially self-defeating strategy. As mentioned above, it could lead Japan and South Korea to seek nuclear weapons, stoking arms races and elevating regional tensions. Alternatively, and perhaps more worryingly, it might encourage the scenario that offshore balancers seek to avoid, by easing China’s ascent to regional hegemony. As Robert Gilpin has written, “Retrenchment by its very nature is an indication of relative weakness and declining power, and thus retrenchment can have a deteriorating effect on relations with allies and rivals. Sensing the decline of their protector, allies try to obtain the best deal they can from the rising master of the system. Rivals are stimulated to ‘close in,’ and frequently they precipitate a conflict in the process.”54

## Debt PIC

### 1NC

Vote negative to affirm the 1AC except their call “to forgive debt.”

#### Debt abolition fails -- totalizing rejection prevents strategic redeployment that stops global crises.

Holmstrom, PhD, 15 (Nancy, Prof Emeritus@Rutgers, Debt Forgiveness: Who Owes Whom for What Tikkun (2015) 30 (1): 41.)

The lion’s share of indebtedness in this world is invalid and immoral. Forgiveness is not what is called for; it’s liberation. Talk of a “debt jubilee” leaves open whether the debts are valid or not, but talking about debt forgiveness raises the question of whether a debt is valid from a moral point of view. By definition, calls for forgiveness imply wrongdoing by the one being forgiven. For this reason, forgiveness is seen not as a moral obligation but rather as an act of generosity. The God who forgives sinners is a God of love and compassion, not a vengeful God. But what if nothing wrong has been done? A prisoner who has been wrongfully convicted is exonerated, not forgiven. And if a person has indeed violated a law but the law is unjust, then forgiveness is not the relevant concept. Thus, to ask whether an act should be forgiven inevitably raises the question of whether the act was morally wrong. Most debtors in the world today—including those in debt bondage, in medical debt, in education debt, and more—have committed no wrongs, so what is called for is cancellation and liberation, not forgiveness. Building consciousness against the validity of debt in the world today is essential to building a movement that can force the powers-that-be to rescind the debt or at least restructure it in more favorable terms. It is also important psychologically for the indebted. We are raised to believe we ought to obey the law, including paying our debts, and hence we feel guilty, ashamed, or embarrassed if we do not. Whole countries are in thrall and made to beg for relief. Rejection of the validity of our debts can at least relieve the psychological burden of those burdened by debt and can help to build a movement against them. Immoral Debts There are many situations in which debts clearly lack moral validity. One particular egregious case involves debt bondage. Only desperately poor people agree to loans forcing them to work for a lender for extended periods of time. Though recognized as a modern form of slavery, often passed through generations, and illegal in most countries, it is nevertheless pervasive throughout the world, even in the United States. Obviously, debtors in this situation need liberation, not debt forgiveness. Whole countries are in similar straits due to exorbitant loans by powerful countries that reap the bounty of these countries’ resources. Through structural adjustment programs (loans from the International Monetary Fund that come with coercive strings attached), debtor nations are required to enact harsh austerity measures to pay their debts to international lending agencies, which have been likened to loan sharks. Again, only desperately poor countries would agree to such conditions. Moreover, the causes of their poverty are in most cases inextricably tied to racism and imperial domination, both historically and in the current period. These examples are extreme and may seem irrelevant to most people in the United States who are in debt. But their very extremity helps to bring out the core idea expressed by Ralph Waldo Emerson who said, “A man in debt is so far a slave.” The majority of Americans are in debt for two reasons: medical bills and loans to pay for higher education. Even public universities today cannot be financed by most people without loans, and even middle-class people are a major illness away from financial disaster. Medical bills are the cause of 60 percent of bankruptcies in the United States, but bankruptcy cannot save those burdened by student debt who can never escape their debt. Are medical and student debt and the suffering they cause simply unfortunate for the individuals? Or should the debts be forgiven? Or, rather, shouldn’t they be seen as invalid in the first place? Every human being ought to have the medical care and education they need as basic rights. Medical care is a matter of life and death, and education at all levels is necessary for a better life both for individuals and for the society as a whole. The development of human capacities is essential for an advanced society and for any democratic one. Our global economy and the global ecological challenges we face make it all the more imperative. Mortgage debt is another huge contributor to Americans’ indebtedness. Due to predatory and fraudulent loans, and harsh loan terms, home foreclosures are often the consequence. The economic downturn, for which workers are hardly responsible, may have made them unable to make their mortgage payments. Or perhaps they could not pay their taxes because they were public employees whose financially strapped municipalities reneged on their contracts. In one case contracts are sacred; in the other, they are not. Home ownership happens to be the most significant financial asset for black women, who are also disproportionately public employees. So who owes whom for what here? Randall Robinson’s The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks argues powerfully that the United States owes reparations to descendants of slaves whose labor created the wealth in the United States. Climate Debt One could go further in challenging the moral legitimacy of debt than I have done so far. The act of declaring most debts invalid does not fundamentally challenge capitalism, which rests on the idea that a society based on unlimited private property is the morally best system. (Some defend capitalism in explicitly moral terms, while others claim it is the only possible system, and therefore moral criticisms are otiose.) Reformers of capitalism advocate limits on private property and the provision of basic incomes to everyone so no one need go into debt, but these reforms have not taken hold: indeed, the more capitalism has developed throughout the globe, the more unequal it has become. Going further, if we recognize that private property rights by definition are rights of exclusion, then we could advocate common property as the moral norm for a society, but with personal property (that is, property for personal consumption—thus distinguished from private property) as a core element of a good society. All humans are morally equal and should share whatever is shareable, starting with the basic resources of the planet. Establishing universal access to planetary resources as a moral norm leads to a very different understanding of debt. Individuals’ debts pale, exposed as invalid, and instead we begin to countenance a colossal, unpaid, and morally valid debt: climate debt. By this I mean the debt owed by the richest countries (which have stoked climate change with their carbon emissions) to some of the poorest countries in the world, which are suffering the most from global warming, even though they did nothing to cause it. This debt ought to be paid but is rarely even acknowledged by those who owe it. From desertification in Africa, to flooding in Bangladesh, to the loss of fresh water in Bolivia due to glacial melt, the damage is staggering. Ecological refugees now outnumber refugees from war and violence. And if countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia must restrict their development for the sake of the planet, they should be compensated by those who have benefited from the unsustainable economic system that has caused the crisis. Ironically, many of the countries that are owed compensation for ecological damage are “debtor nations,” in thrall to global capitalist institutions. But who really owes whom? Changing Consciousness The facts are clear. The problem is political: how to build a worldwide movement that can force countries to adopt more sustainable and equitable models of economic life and to reverse the dominant understanding of who owes whom for what. As with all social movements, there are both intellectual and practical tasks. We need to break the hold of the dominant ideas, which justify the status quo—no easy task, given the corporate hold over the media in this country. These dominant ideas are moral but also empirical, in the broadest sense. In fact I think there is often more agreement on fundamental moral principles than it seems. For example, regarding poor countries’ indebtedness: if we ask most Americans whether we should give more in foreign aid, probably most would say no. However, I have found throughout my years of teaching that my students were enormously more generous than United States foreign aid is. Most thought we should be giving around 20 percent of GDP in (non-military) aid, thought we were giving maybe 5 percent, and were deeply shocked to know that in fact we give less than 1 percent. Add the historical information as to why certain countries are poor in the first place and the argument is even more compelling that their debt should be exonerated. Similarly I think most people in the United States are appalled by the fact that the financial institutions that caused the Great Recession were not punished, while poor people are losing their homes. Hypocrisy is deplored universally. Our religious traditions predate capitalism and have powerful resources to challenge the validity of most contemporary indebtedness. St. Thomas Aquinas, for example, said that if a poor man takes from a rich man to feed his family, then strictly speaking that is not theft. But ideas change not primarily by good counter-arguments, but by the sense that other worlds are possible. And this sense develops through political struggle. The history of the labor and poor peoples’ movements in the United States, as documented by Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward in Poor People’s Movements, shows that people have to be willing to disrupt the status quo to make changes. Sit-ins to prevent evictions are one strategy; debt refusal is another. But individual refusal is fragmented, complicated, and risky. Instead, we have to figure out how to make this protest collective. Protests against austerity measures enacted to meet debts that were taken on by public bodies, whether in Detroit or Athens, are one kind of collective refusal. The use of eminent domain to acquire houses threatened by foreclosure and then sell them back to their owners at affordable prices is another. People in Richmond, California, have actively considered this creative use of eminent domain.

#### 1 -- Sustainability -- extinction.

Dr. Peter Kareiva 18, Ph.D. in Ecology and Applied Mathematics from Cornell University, Director of the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA, Pritzker Distinguished Professor in Environment & Sustainability at UCLA, et al., September 2018, “Existential Risk Due To Ecosystem Collapse: Nature Strikes Back”, Futures, Volume 102, p. 39-50

In summary, six of the nine proposed planetary boundaries (phosphorous, nitrogen, biodiversity, land use, atmospheric aerosol loading, and chemical pollution) are unlikely to be associated with existential risks. They all correspond to a degraded environment, but in our assessment do not represent existential risks. However, the three remaining boundaries (climate change, global freshwater cycle, and ocean acidification) do pose existential risks. This is because of intrinsic positive feedback loops, substantial lag times between system change and experiencing the consequences of that change, and the fact these different boundaries interact with one another in ways that yield surprises. In addition, climate, freshwater, and ocean acidification are all directly connected to the provision of food and water, and shortages of food and water can create conflict and social unrest.

Climate change has a long history of disrupting civilizations and sometimes precipitating the collapse of cultures or mass emigrations (McMichael, 2017). For example, the 12th century drought in the North American Southwest is held responsible for the collapse of the Anasazi pueblo culture. More recently, the infamous potato famine of 1846–1849 and the large migration of Irish to the U.S. can be traced to a combination of factors, one of which was climate. Specifically, 1846 was an unusually warm and moist year in Ireland, providing the climatic conditions favorable to the fungus that caused the potato blight. As is so often the case, poor government had a role as well—as the British government forbade the import of grains from outside Britain (imports that could have helped to redress the ravaged potato yields).

Climate change intersects with freshwater resources because it is expected to exacerbate drought and water scarcity, as well as flooding. Climate change can even impair water quality because it is associated with heavy rains that overwhelm sewage treatment facilities, or because it results in higher concentrations of pollutants in groundwater as a result of enhanced evaporation and reduced groundwater recharge. Ample clean water is not a luxury—it is essential for human survival. Consequently, cities, regions and nations that lack clean freshwater are vulnerable to social disruption and disease.

Finally, ocean acidification is linked to climate change because it is driven by CO2 emissions just as global warming is. With close to 20% of the world’s protein coming from oceans (FAO, 2016), the potential for severe impacts due to acidification is obvious. Less obvious, but perhaps more insidious, is the interaction between climate change and the loss of oyster and coral reefs due to acidification. Acidification is known to interfere with oyster reef building and coral reefs. Climate change also increases storm frequency and severity. Coral reefs and oyster reefs provide protection from storm surge because they reduce wave energy (Spalding et al., 2014). If these reefs are lost due to acidification at the same time as storms become more severe and sea level rises, coastal communities will be exposed to unprecedented storm surge—and may be ravaged by recurrent storms.

A key feature of the risk associated with climate change is that mean annual temperature and mean annual rainfall are not the variables of interest. Rather it is extreme episodic events that place nations and entire regions of the world at risk. These extreme events are by definition “rare” (once every hundred years), and changes in their likelihood are challenging to detect because of their rarity, but are exactly the manifestations of climate change that we must get better at anticipating (Diffenbaugh et al., 2017). Society will have a hard time responding to shorter intervals between rare extreme events because in the lifespan of an individual human, a person might experience as few as two or three extreme events. How likely is it that you would notice a change in the interval between events that are separated by decades, especially given that the interval is not regular but varies stochastically? A concrete example of this dilemma can be found in the past and expected future changes in storm-related flooding of New York City. The highly disruptive flooding of New York City associated with Hurricane Sandy represented a flood height that occurred once every 500 years in the 18th century, and that occurs now once every 25 years, but is expected to occur once every 5 years by 2050 (Garner et al., 2017). This change in frequency of extreme floods has profound implications for the measures New York City should take to protect its infrastructure and its population, yet because of the stochastic nature of such events, this shift in flood frequency is an elevated risk that will go unnoticed by most people.

4. The combination of positive feedback loops and societal inertia is fertile ground for global environmental catastrophes.

Humans are remarkably ingenious, and have adapted to crises throughout their history. Our doom has been repeatedly predicted, only to be averted by innovation (Ridley, 2011). However, the many stories of human ingenuity successfully addressing existential risks such as global famine or extreme air pollution represent environmental challenges that are largely linear, have immediate consequences, and operate without positive feedbacks. For example, the fact that food is in short supply does not increase the rate at which humans consume food—thereby increasing the shortage. Similarly, massive air pollution episodes such as the London fog of 1952 that killed 12,000 people did not make future air pollution events more likely. In fact it was just the opposite—the London fog sent such a clear message that Britain quickly enacted pollution control measures (Stradling, 2016). Food shortages, air pollution, water pollution, etc. send immediate signals to society of harm, which then trigger a negative feedback of society seeking to reduce the harm.

In contrast, today’s great environmental crisis of climate change may cause some harm but there are generally long time delays between rising CO2 concentrations and damage to humans. The consequence of these delays are an absence of urgency; thus although 70% of Americans believe global warming is happening, only 40% think it will harm them (http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-us-2016/). Secondly, unlike past environmental challenges, the Earth’s climate system is rife with positive feedback loops. In particular, as CO2 increases and the climate warms, that very warming can cause more CO2 release which further increases global warming, and then more CO2, and so on. Table 2 summarizes the best documented positive feedback loops for the Earth’s climate system. These feedbacks can be neatly categorized into carbon cycle, biogeochemical, biogeophysical, cloud, ice-albedo, and water vapor feedbacks. As important as it is to understand these feedbacks individually, it is even more essential to study the interactive nature of these feedbacks. Modeling studies show that when interactions among feedback loops are included, uncertainty increases dramatically and there is a heightened potential for perturbations to be magnified (e.g., Cox, Betts, Jones, Spall, & Totterdell, 2000; Hajima, Tachiiri, Ito, & Kawamiya, 2014; Knutti & Rugenstein, 2015; Rosenfeld, Sherwood, Wood, & Donner, 2014). This produces a wide range of future scenarios.

Positive feedbacks in the carbon cycle involves the enhancement of future carbon contributions to the atmosphere due to some initial increase in atmospheric CO2. This happens because as CO2 accumulates, it reduces the efficiency in which oceans and terrestrial ecosystems sequester carbon, which in return feeds back to exacerbate climate change (Friedlingstein et al., 2001). Warming can also increase the rate at which organic matter decays and carbon is released into the atmosphere, thereby causing more warming (Melillo et al., 2017). Increases in food shortages and lack of water is also of major concern when biogeophysical feedback mechanisms perpetuate drought conditions. The underlying mechanism here is that losses in vegetation increases the surface albedo, which suppresses rainfall, and thus enhances future vegetation loss and more suppression of rainfall—thereby initiating or prolonging a drought (Chamey, Stone, & Quirk, 1975). To top it off, overgrazing depletes the soil, leading to augmented vegetation loss (Anderies, Janssen, & Walker, 2002).

Climate change often also increases the risk of forest fires, as a result of higher temperatures and persistent drought conditions. The expectation is that forest fires will become more frequent and severe with climate warming and drought (Scholze, Knorr, Arnell, & Prentice, 2006), a trend for which we have already seen evidence (Allen et al., 2010). Tragically, the increased severity and risk of Southern California wildfires recently predicted by climate scientists (Jin et al., 2015), was realized in December 2017, with the largest fire in the history of California (the “Thomas fire” that burned 282,000 acres, https://www.vox.com/2017/12/27/16822180/thomas-fire-california-largest-wildfire). This catastrophic fire embodies the sorts of positive feedbacks and interacting factors that could catch humanity off-guard and produce a true apocalyptic event. Record-breaking rains produced an extraordinary flush of new vegetation, that then dried out as record heat waves and dry conditions took hold, coupled with stronger than normal winds, and ignition. Of course the record-fire released CO2 into the atmosphere, thereby contributing to future warming.

Out of all types of feedbacks, water vapor and the ice-albedo feedbacks are the most clearly understood mechanisms. Losses in reflective snow and ice cover drive up surface temperatures, leading to even more melting of snow and ice cover—this is known as the ice-albedo feedback (Curry, Schramm, & Ebert, 1995). As snow and ice continue to melt at a more rapid pace, millions of people may be displaced by flooding risks as a consequence of sea level rise near coastal communities (Biermann & Boas, 2010; Myers, 2002; Nicholls et al., 2011). The water vapor feedback operates when warmer atmospheric conditions strengthen the saturation vapor pressure, which creates a warming effect given water vapor’s strong greenhouse gas properties (Manabe & Wetherald, 1967).

Global warming tends to increase cloud formation because warmer temperatures lead to more evaporation of water into the atmosphere, and warmer temperature also allows the atmosphere to hold more water. The key question is whether this increase in clouds associated with global warming will result in a positive feedback loop (more warming) or a negative feedback loop (less warming). For decades, scientists have sought to answer this question and understand the net role clouds play in future climate projections (Schneider et al., 2017). Clouds are complex because they both have a cooling (reflecting incoming solar radiation) and warming (absorbing incoming solar radiation) effect (Lashof, DeAngelo, Saleska, & Harte, 1997). The type of cloud, altitude, and optical properties combine to determine how these countervailing effects balance out. Although still under debate, it appears that in most circumstances the cloud feedback is likely positive (Boucher et al., 2013). For example, models and observations show that increasing greenhouse gas concentrations reduces the low-level cloud fraction in the Northeast Pacific at decadal time scales. This then has a positive feedback effect and enhances climate warming since less solar radiation is reflected by the atmosphere (Clement, Burgman, & Norris, 2009).

The key lesson from the long list of potentially positive feedbacks and their interactions is that runaway climate change, and runaway perturbations have to be taken as a serious possibility. Table 2 is just a snapshot of the type of feedbacks that have been identified (see Supplementary material for a more thorough explanation of positive feedback loops). However, this list is not exhaustive and the possibility of undiscovered positive feedbacks portends even greater existential risks. The many environmental crises humankind has previously averted (famine, ozone depletion, London fog, water pollution, etc.) were averted because of political will based on solid scientific understanding. We cannot count on complete scientific understanding when it comes to positive feedback loops and climate change.

#### 2 -- It reigns in the worst excesses of capitalism, halting financial risk-taking.

Krugman 15(Paul Krugman, “Debt Is Good,” 8/21/15) http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/21/opinion/paul-krugman-debt-is-good-for-the-economy.html

Rand Paul said something funny the other day. No, really — although of course it wasn’t intentional. On his Twitter account he decried the irresponsibility of American fiscal policy, declaring, “The last time the United States was debt free was 1835.” Wags quickly noted that the U.S. economy has, on the whole, done pretty well these past 180 years, suggesting that having the government owe the private sector money might not be all that bad a thing. The British government, by the way, has been in debt for more than three centuries, an era spanning the Industrial Revolution, victory over Napoleon, and more. But is the point simply that public debt isn’t as bad as legend has it? Or can government debt actually be a good thing? Believe it or not, many economists argue that the economy needs a sufficient amount of public debt out there to function well. And how much is sufficient? Maybe more than we currently have. That is, there’s a reasonable argument to be made that **part of what ails the world economy right now is that governments aren’t deep enough in debt.** I know that may sound crazy. After all, we’ve spent much of the past five or six years in a state of fiscal panic, with all the Very Serious People declaring that we must slash deficits and reduce debt now now now or we’ll turn into Greece, Greece I tell you. But the power of the deficit scolds was always a triumph of ideology over evidence, and a growing number of genuinely serious people — most recently Narayana Kocherlakota, the departing president of the Minneapolis Fed — are making the case that we need more, not less, government debt. Why? One answer is that issuing debt is a way to pay for useful things, and we should do more of that when the price is right. The United States suffers from obvious deficiencies in roads, rails, water systems and more; meanwhile, the federal government can borrow at historically low interest rates. So this is a very good time to be borrowing and investing in the future, and a very bad time for what has actually happened: an unprecedented decline in public construction spending adjusted for population growth and inflation. Beyond that, those very low interest rates are telling us something about what markets want. I’ve already mentioned that having at least some government debt outstanding helps the economy function better. How so? The answer, according to M.I.T.’s Ricardo Caballero and others, is that the debt of stable, reliable governments provides “safe assets” that help investors manage risks, make transactions easier and avoid a destructive scramble for cash. Now, in principle the private sector can also create safe assets, such as deposits in banks that are universally perceived as sound. In the years before the 2008 financial crisis Wall Street claimed to have invented whole new classes of safe assets by slicing and dicing cash flows from subprime mortgages and other sources. But all of that supposedly brilliant financial engineering turned out to be a con job: When the housing bubble burst, all that AAA-rated paper turned into sludge. So investors scurried back into the haven provided by the debt of the United States and a few other major economies. In the process they drove interest rates on that debt way down. And those low interest rates, Mr. Kocherlakota declares, are a problem. When interest rates on government debt are very low even when the economy is strong, there’s not much room to cut them when the economy is weak, making it much harder to fight recessions. There may also be consequences for financial stability: Very low returns on safe assets may push investors into too much risk-taking — or for that matter encourage another round of destructive Wall Street hocus-pocus. What can be done? Simply raising interest rates, as some financial types keep demanding (with an eye on their own bottom lines), would undermine our still-fragile recovery. What we need are policies that would permit higher rates in good times without causing a slump. And one such policy, Mr. Kocherlakota argues, would be targeting **a higher level of debt.** In other words, the great debt panic that warped the U.S. political scene from 2010 to 2012, and still dominates economic discussion in Britain and the eurozone, was even more wrongheaded than those of us in the anti-austerity camp realized. Not only were governments that listened to the fiscal scolds kicking the economy when it was down, prolonging the slump; not only were they slashing public investment at the very moment bond investors were practically pleading with them to spend more; they may have been setting us up for future crises. And the ironic thing is that these foolish policies, and all the human suffering they created, were sold with appeals to prudence and fiscal responsibility.

#### Nuclear war.

Mann 14 [Eric Mann is a special agent with a United States federal agency, with significant domestic and international counterintelligence and counter-terrorism experience. Worked as a special assistant for a U.S. Senator and served as a presidential appointee for the U.S. Congress. He is currently responsible for an internal security and vulnerability assessment program. Bachelors @ University of South Carolina, Graduate degree in Homeland Security @ Georgetown. “AUSTERITY, ECONOMIC DECLINE, AND FINANCIAL WEAPONS OF WAR: A NEW PARADIGM FOR GLOBAL SECURITY,” May 2014, <https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/37262/MANN-THESIS-2014.pdf>]

The conclusions reached in this thesis demonstrate how economic considerations within states can figure prominently into the calculus for future conflicts. The findings also suggest that security issues with economic or financial underpinnings will transcend classical determinants of war and conflict, and change the manner by which rival states engage in hostile acts toward one another. The research shows that security concerns emanating from economic uncertainty and the inherent vulnerabilities within global financial markets will present new challenges for national security, and provide developing states new asymmetric options for balancing against stronger states.¶ The security areas, identified in the proceeding chapters, are likely to mature into global security threats in the immediate future. As the case study on South Korea suggest, the overlapping security issues associated with economic decline and reduced military spending by the United States will affect allied confidence in America’s security guarantees. The study shows that this outcome could cause regional instability or realignments of strategic partnerships in the Asia-pacific region with ramifications for U.S. national security. Rival states and non-state groups may also become emboldened to challenge America’s status in the unipolar international system.¶ The potential risks associated with stolen or loose WMD, resulting from poor security, can also pose a threat to U.S. national security. The case study on Pakistan, Syria and North Korea show how financial constraints affect weapons security making weapons vulnerable to theft, and how financial factors can influence WMD proliferation by contributing to the motivating factors behind a trusted insider’s decision to sell weapons technology. The inherent vulnerabilities within the global financial markets will provide terrorists’ organizations and other non-state groups, who object to the current international system or distribution of power, with opportunities to disrupt global finance and perhaps weaken America’s status. A more ominous threat originates from states intent on increasing diversification of foreign currency holdings, establishing alternatives to the dollar for international trade, or engaging financial warfare against the United States.

## Cap K

### 1NC

#### **Neoliberal multiculturalism cannot be divorced from the contemporary structures of white supremacy. This reconfigures racial relations into a process of extraction while subordinating geographies to dislocation.**

Pulido, L., Bruno, T., Faiver-Serna, C., & Galentine, C. (2019). Environmental Deregulation, Spectacular Racism, and White Nationalism in the Trump Era. Annals of the American Association of Geographers, 1–13. doi:10.1080/24694452.2018.1549473

The Trump era marks a shift in the racial formation. According to Melamed (2011), the early twenty-first century was characterized by neoliberal multiculturalism, a form of antiracism in which race is dematerialized and severed from capitalism’s violence. Neoliberal multiculturalism, including political correctness, was delegitimized by the Trump campaign. Trump’s racist rhetoric, which affirms whiteness and connected emotionally, inspired intense media coverage precisely because of its transgressive nature (Hochschild 2016). His transgressive racism accomplishes numerous political objectives, including dehumanizing his targets, consolidating his power, eroding democratic norms, and distracting from policy and legal changes. The spectacle of Trump’s racism—the incessant tweets, outrageous statements, and dehumanizing immigration policies—cannot be divorced from his neoliberal environmental agenda. Indeed, a growing number of scholars have shown how deep 2 Pulido et al. historicization is necessary to understand how racism informs contemporary economic structures and processes (Wilson 2000; Gilmore 2002; Baptist 2016; Woods 2017). Recently, Inwood (2018) argued that whiteness, which is a form of white supremacy, is a powerful “counter-revolutionary” force that “impede[s] progressive and racial reconfigurations of the US racial state” (3). This is an important move that foregrounds the deeply problematic nature of whiteness itself, as it readily slips into white nationalism and other forms of white supremacy. One reason that whiteness impedes progressive change, including environmentalism, is because it is, by definition, antidemocratic, as it seeks to exclude and subordinate. Never in U.S. history has mobilizing along whiteness led to greater democracy and equality. Indeed, its opposite—the black radical tradition (BRT)—consistently leans toward greater freedom and inclusion (Robinson 2000). The BRT refers to the centuries-long struggle of black people to resist racial capitalism, a system that “not only extracts life from black bodies, but dehumanizes all workers while colonizing indigenous lands and incarcerating surplus bodies” (G. T. Johnson and Lubin 2017, 12). The BRT, which is not limited to black people, includes abolition geographies (Gilmore 2017) and abolition ecologies (Heynen 2016) and is generally associated with progressive change. Inwood (2015) noted a second problem with whiteness: its usage as a “racial fix.” Similar to a spatial fix, racial fixes are employed to resolve a crisis, however temporarily. In the United States, crises are routinely resolved by deploying racism to either blame people of color or otherwise appeal to the white nation (Hochschild 2016). Solving crises through preexisting relations, including racism, is fundamental to U.S. politics (Gilmore 1999; Woods 2017). We see both dynamics occurring in the Trump era. Trump employs a racial fix by blaming racial others and immigrants to offer the white nation a psychological wage (Du Bois 2014). This wage does not merely validate white people’s superiority; rather, it addresses their emotional dislocation, fear, and resentment of a changing world (Hochschild 2016), affirming their status as the true nation (Thobani 2007). Clearly, this works against progressive change by aligning the white working class with capital (Du Bois 2014), but it also has implications for environmental governance (Hochschild 2016). The current wave of white supremacy has been brewing for decades as Republicans attracted southern whites through racial resentment (Hajnal and Rivera 2014; Inwood 2015; Tesler 2016; Woods 2017). The election of Barack Obama, growing economic precarity, changing demographics, and multiculturalism all contributed to a deep resentment on the part of many whites, which candidate Trump tapped into. If a nation is an “imagined political community” (Anderson 1983), the U.S. white nation is a political community constituted by whiteness and Christianity. It is not defined by the exclusion of non-whites and non-Christians but rather by the valorization of whiteness and Christianity. Not only does it equate white Christianity with the essence of the U.S. nation, but it considers it superior to those others deemed threats or intruders.1 MoretonRobinson (2016) argued that white nationalism in settler societies is largely defined by entitlement and possession, especially in terms of territory and state (see also Harris 1993). Although whiteness has varied geographically in the United States (Vanderbeck 2006; see also C. Johnson and Coleman 2012), contemporary white nationalism has been consolidated and strengthened through populism and white supremacy (Inwood 2015), although it might contain diverse racist ideologies. By nurturing the white nation via spectacular racism, Trump has shifted the racial formation so that overt white supremacy is increasingly normalized (Page and Dittmer 2018). This, in turn, paves the way for dehumanizing policy. For instance, when he declared that there “were fine people on both sides” (“Full Transcript and Video” 2017), after the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Trump legitimized white supremacist violence, thereby normalizing it. Such acts contribute to a climate in which Latinx children were separated from their parents at the U.S.–Mexico border, as happened in 2018. Such rhetoric and actions not only nurture and embolden the white nation, but they dehumanize racial others: They are not worthy of full legal and moral consideration. Indeed, they are arguably mere pawns in Trump’s political machinations. Another important shift in the racial formation is spectacular racism’s ability to deflect attention away from political and economic crises. This is especially significant early in new regimes, when accepted norms are being violated and spectacular racism devours both media attention and individual energy. Environmental Deregulation, Spectacular Racism, and White Nationalism 3 Relatedly, because the white nation is being nurtured, the possibility of structural critique is foreclosed. Instead, the white nation is offered false explanations, further dividing the working class. At the time of this writing, for example, during midterm elections, Trump hoped to send 15,000 troops to the southern U.S. border to block Central American immigrants, who he has demonized and blames for U.S. problems (Gonzales 2018). Spectacular racism fuels and coexists with other manifestations of racism, including institutional racism and white privilege (Pulido 2000). It functions to enhance authoritarian and populist power by solidifying and empowering a political base that is partially animated by white supremacy and xenophobia (Zeskind 2012; McElwee and McDaniel 2017). It generates loyalty to an individual, rather than to political ideas or institutions (Frum 2017; see also Taub 2016). Spectacular racism, white nationalism, and authoritarianism are all distinct but work together in the Trump era. Portions of the U.S. electorate have always supported authoritarian figures (Hetherington and Suhay 2011; MacWilliams 2016; Koch 2017), who offer easy solutions to insecurity and change (Taub 2016). They rise to power through elections by aligning themselves with establishment politics and appealing to the public (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). Although certainly not Trump’s only means of attracting support, spectacular racism has been central to his strategy. Trump’s calculated use of spectacular racism has channeled diffuse anger and anxiety into a ferocious wave that is the white nation. Thus, the white nation is foundational to Trump’s power. Despite violating social norms, disregarding laws, and maintaining a chaotic administration, Trump has retained a loyal base (Graham 2017). Trump has successfully reshaped the Republican Party (Malone, Enten, and Nield 2016; Isenstadt 2017; Thompson 2018), so that it no longer even espouses racial equality (Page and Dittmer 2018). Trump understands the power of his base and seeks to nurture it, as it allows him to continue to function as an authoritarian. The white nation is the fulcrum that enables Trump’s agenda, which clearly favors elites and capital.

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### L – Shulman

#### Moten is a refusal of radical democracy – that kills organizing

Shulman 2020 (G, “Fred Moten’s Refusals and Consents: The Politics of Fugitivity. Political Theory, 009059172093737. doi:10.1177/0090591720937375)

If different nominations of impasse yield different imaginative and political efforts to make a way out of no way, then rationalism to figure it out, or revolutionary suicide to muscle through, can be compared to idioms of tragic inhabitation, radical imagination, action in concert, or fugitive ingenuity. The issue of impasse thus involves genre, for the literary conventions that frame our expectations of life and history also shape if and how we name an impasse—how we reproduce, navigate, or contest it. It is no wonder, then, that creative theorists rework genres they inherit. To think impasse and genre together therefore poses the question by which Aristotle defined rhetoric: what are the available resources—metaphor, idiom, narrative, genre—of persuasion? This two-sided dynamic—of dramatizing impasse and aliveness— frames this essay’s exploration of how **Fred Moten theorizes** racial impasse, and enacts what he calls **the black radical tradition**, **through a trope of fugitivity**. To assess the political and aesthetic resources in that trope, and its vexed relations with the political, I will draw out Moten’s arguments but also imagine a conversation with Sheldon Wolin’s “fugitive democracy” by way of Shulman 3 their critiques of the notorious binary Hannah Arendt used to rescue the fugitive natality of politics from “the social” as a deadening impasse.3 On the one hand, each theorist narrates a catastrophic modernity at an impasse, as instrumental rationality, biopolitical sovereignty, managerial norms, possessive individualism, and liberal forms of representation authorize what Tocqueville called democratic despotism. **Each opposes** “what is called politics” as Thoreau once put it, to defend a revolutionary treasure, less from direct domination and more from devitalizing **incorporation into the institutions** and codes of modern (liberal) order**. As each refuses the genre of a “democracy”** at home in Leviathan, each rejects prevailing genres of theory (Moten and Wolin say “critique”) at home in an academy serving it**. To defend a practical and theoretical vitality that is endangered—made fugitive**—by forms of (even “democratic”) rule, **each conjures spaces and practices of creative action and thought to refuse and evade if not undo the organized powers dominating modernity. Rather than depict a choice between optimism or pessimism, each inhabits modern impasse to enable an aliveness it seems to foreclose**. Each would foster what Jonathan Lear calls “**a possibility for new possibilities**.”4 **But obviously, Moten’s premise of empire and slavery entails decisive differences**. For, though Wolin rejects Arendt’s devaluation of the social and anchors “fugitive democracy” in experiences of sociality he calls commonality, he shares her investment in the political as a vitalizing, even redemptive practice, whereas **Moten deems commonality, citizenship, and politics irredeemably contaminated by the constitutive power of the antiblackness** neither Arendt nor Wolin see. **Moten thus composes an “antipolitical romance” with “black sociality**,” which he depicts as bearing “fugitive” forms of natality and commonality, and which he opposes to “politics” as ordinarily practiced and to “the political” as canonically theorized. Indeed, **he insists that the vitality of black sociality requires refusal of any (even radically democratic) notion of the political and of formalized or institutionalized practices of organizing power**. In a modern impasse created as politics and theory wed antiblackness and rule, he sees **black fugitivity flourishing as an antipolitical, vernacular genre, a poesis of explicitly “informal” form-giving** in performance and music, in ordinary practices of collaboration and reflection, and in prophecy. How can fugitivity be invoked to redeem and yet also to refuse both the political and democratic? My answer traces their divergent figurations of modern impasse and fugitive aliveness to highlight both the stakes in how they imagine the political and race, and the rhetorical practices and genre conventions by which they do so. My goal is to show why political theorists should think black life and radical democracy—black fugitivity and fugitive democracy— together, albeit in tensions that can be acute, and not always fruitful. I emphasize Moten’s work, though, because of its challenges to radical democracy and 4 Political Theory 00(0) democratic theory. Taking it seriously means facing the impulse to “defend politics” in ways that merely repeat the very terms he questions, that reiterate the very hopes for democracy he insists are foreclosed by antiblackness. But, **if we credit the truths about antiblackness and the political that animate his refusals, and so inhabit his empowering vision of fugitivity as a poetics and praxis, then we can find resources to revise—to enlarge, complicate, enrich— what we count as political, despite his own rejection.** For **his vision of fugitivity not only models insurgent and aesthetic aspirations to refuse rule and evade capture by it, but also models** what Robert Cover calls **a “juris-generative” capacity to make nomos, as a web of meaning or ordering grammar that gives form to life in vitalizing, not deadening, ways.** The poesis-as-praxis that Moten calls **fugitivity thus offers not only a social and aesthetic alternative to “politics” as such, as he argues, but resources for re-imagining the form and content of a radically democratic politics.**5 **Inflecting his refusal, by showing how the political remains both inescapable and valuable, is important in part because his “romance” of black sociality abstracts from structures of inequality in the “undercommons,” inequalities that at once bespeak and require “politics,” and in part because his investment in “informal form” disavows institutionalized or organized forms of power that have in fact been crucial to historic forms of black self-defense and subaltern struggle. Such idealizations and foreclosures not only obscure the actual practice of black radicalism and indigenous politics, but also risk a self-defeating impasse instead of offering a way out of no way**. It makes sense to refuse false hopes of inclusion or assimilation, and so also the conventional terms of both liberal politics and left radicalism, for the sake of fostering and defending black solidarity. **Moten is thus right to claim that his vision of black fugitivity honors key features of what Cedric Robinson called “the black radical tradition.**” **But the complex reality is that theorists and activists in that tradition repeatedly have redefined, not (only) disavowed, “the political,” and** radicalized, not (only) **refused, “democracy,” and they have done so by way of the sociality and poetics Moten makes only their fugitive antithesis.**

### L – Anti-Statism

#### The aff materially silences opposition and re-entrenches the power of capital by leaving intact broader structures of global political economy---it creates catharsis that prevents action against climate change and crises of neoliberalism

Parenti & Emanuele 15

(Christian Parenti, former visiting fellow at CUNY's Center for Place, Culture and Politics, as well as a Soros Senior Justice Fellow, teaches in the Liberal Studies program at New York University, interview with Vincent Emanuele, writer, activist and radio journalist who lives and works in the Rust Belt, “Climate Change, Militarism, Neoliberalism and the State,” May 17, 2015, http://ouleft.sp-mesolite.tilted.net/?p=1980)

You mention mutual aid and how it was overhyped by the left in the aftermath of Katrina. I’m thinking of the same thing in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. You’ve been critical of the left in the US for not approaching and using the state apparatus when dealing with climate change and other ecological issues. Can you talk about your critique of the US left and why you think the state can, and should, be used in a positive manner?¶ Just to be clear, I think it is absolutely heroic and noble what activists have done. My critique is not of peoples’ actions, or of people; it’s of a lack of sophistication, and I hold myself partly accountable, as part of the US left, for our deficiencies. With Hurricane Sandy, the Occupy folks did some amazing stuff. Yet, at a certain level, their actions became charity. People were talking about how many meals they distributed. That’s charity. That is, in many ways, a neoliberal solution. That’s exactly what the capitalist system in the US would like: US citizens not demanding their government redistribute wealth from the 1% to the 99%. The capitalists love to see people turn to each other for money and aid. Unwittingly, that’s what the anarcho-liberal left fell into.¶ This is partly due a very American style of anti-state rhetoric that transcends left and right. The state is not just prisons or the military. It’s also Head Start, quality public education, the library, clean water, the EPA, the City University of New York system – a superb, affordable set of schools that turns out top-notch, working-class students with the lowest debt burdens in the country. There’s a reason the right is attacking these institutions. Why does the right hate the EPA and public education? Because they don’t want to pay to educate the working class, and they don’t want the working class educated. They don’t want to pay to clean up industry, and that’s what the EPA forces them to do. When the left embraces anarcho-liberal notions of self-help and fantasies of being outside of both government and the market, it cuts itself off from important democratic resources. The state should be seen as an arena of class struggle.¶ When the left turns its back on the social democratic features of government, stops making demands of the state, and fails to reshape government by using the government for progressive ends, it risks playing into the hands of the right. The central message of the American right is that government is bad and must be limited. This message is used to justify austerity. However, in most cases, neoliberal austerity does not actually involve a reduction of government. Typically, restructuring in the name of austerity is really just a transformation of government, not a reduction of it.¶ Over the last 35 years, the state has been profoundly transformed, but it has not been reduced. The size of the government in the economy has not gone down. The state has become less redistributive, more punitive. Instead of a robust program of government-subsidized and public housing, we have the prison system. Instead of well-funded public hospitals, we have profiteering private hospitals funded by enormous amounts of public money. Instead of large numbers of well-paid public workers, we have large budgets for private firms that now subcontract tasks formerly conducted by the government.¶ We need to defend the progressive work of government, which, for me, means immediately defending public education. To be clear, I do not mean merely vote or ask nicely, I mean movements should attack government and government officials, target them with protests, make their lives impossible until they comply. This was done very well with the FCC. And my hat goes off to the activists who saved the internet for us. The left should be thinking about the ways in which it can leverage government.¶ The utility of government was very apparent in Vermont during the aftermath of Hurricane Irene. The rains from that storm destroyed or damaged over a hundred bridges, many miles of road and rail, and swept away houses. Thirteen towns were totally stranded. There was a lot of incredible mutual aid; people just started clearing debris and helping each other out. But within all this, town government was a crucial connective tissue.¶ Due to the tradition of New England town meeting, people are quite involved with their local government. Anarchists should love town meetings. It is no coincidence that Murray Bookchin spent much of his life in Vermont. Town meetings are a form of participatory budgeting without the lefty rigmarole. More importantly, the state government managed to get a huge amount of support from the federal government. The state in turn pushed this down to the town level. Without that federal aid, Vermont would still be in ruins. Vermont is not a big enough political entity to shake down General Electric, a huge employer in Vermont. The Vermont government can’t pressure GE to pay for the rebuilding of local infrastructure, but the federal government can.¶ Vermont would still be a disaster if it didn’t get a transfer of funds and materials from the federal government. Similarly in New York City, the public sector does not get enough praise for the many things it did well after super storm Sandy. Huge parts of the subway system were flooded, yet it was all up and running within the month.¶ As an aside, one of the dirty little secrets about the Vermont economy is that it’s heavily tied-up with the military industrial complex. People think Vermont is all about farming and boutique food processing. Vermont has a pretty diverse economy, but agriculture plays a much smaller role than you might think, about 2 percent of employment. Meanwhile, the state’s industrial sector, along with the government, is one of the top employers, at about 13 percent of all employment. Most of this work is in what’s called precision manufacturing, making stuff like: high performance nozzles, switches, calibrators, and stuff like the lenses used in satellites, or handcrafting the blades that go in GE jet engines. But I digress … As we enter the crisis of climate change, it’s important to be aware of the actually existing legal and institutional mechanisms with which we can contain and control capital.¶ I often joke with my anarchist and libertarian friends and ask if their mutual-aid collectives can run Chicago’s sanitation system or operate satellites. Of course, on one level, I’m joking, but on another level, I’m being quite serious. I don’t think activists on the left properly understand the complexity of modern society. A simple example would be how much sewage is produced in a single day in a country with 330 million people. How do people expect to manage these day-to-day issues? In your opinion, is there a lack of sophistication on the left in terms of what, exactly, the state does and how it functions in our day-to-day lives?¶ It’s sobering to reflect on just how complex the physical systems of modern society are. And though it is very unpopular to say among most American activists, it is important to think about the hierarchies and bureaucracies that are necessarily part of technologically complex systems. A friend of mine is a water engineer in Detroit, and he was talking to me about exactly what you’re mentioning. The sewer system in Detroit is mind-bogglingly enormous and also very dilapidated and very expensive. To not have infrastructure publicly maintained, even though the capitalist class might not admit this, would ultimately undermine capital accumulation.¶ You asked if there is a lack of sophistication. Look, I’m trying to make helpful criticisms to my comrades on the left, particularly to activists who work so hard and valiantly. I’ve criticized divestment as a strategy, yet I support it. I criticized the false claims that divesting fossil fuels stocks would hurt fossil fuel companies. The fossil fuel divestment movement started out making that claim. To its credit, the movement has stopped making such claims. Now, they say that it will remove the industries "social license," which is a problematic concept that comes from the odious world of "corporate social responsibility." However, now, students are becoming politicized, and that’s always great news.¶ For several years, some of us have been trying to get climate activists, the climate left, to take the EPA and the Clean Air Act seriously. The EPA has the power to actually de-carbonize the economy. The divestment logic is: Schools will divest, then fossil fuel companies will be held in greater contempt than they are now? Honestly, they’re already hated by everybody. That does what? That creates the political pressure to stop polluting? We already have those regulations: the Clean Air Act. There was a Supreme Court Case, Massachusetts v. EPA, that was ruled on in 2007. It said the EPA must regulate greenhouse gas emissions. Lots of professional activists in the climate movement, at least up until very recently, have been totally unaware of this.¶ Consequently, they are not making demands of the EPA. They are not making demands of their various local, state and federal environmental agencies. These entities should be enforcing the laws. They have the power. It’s not because the people in the climate movement are bad people or unintelligent. They’re dedicated and extremely smart. It’s because there’s an anti-state ethos within the environmental movement and a romanticization of the local. On a side note, I don’t think all of this stuff about local economies is helpful. Sometimes I think this sort of thinking doesn’t recognize how the global political economy works. The comrades at Jacobin magazine have called this anarcho-liberalism. I think that is a great way to describe the dominant ideology of US left, which is both anarchist and liberal in its sensibilities. This ideology is fundamentally about ignoring government, and instead, being obsessed with scale, size, and, by extension, authenticity. Big things are bad. Small things are good. Planning is bad. Spontaneity is good. It is as insidious as it is ridiculous. But it is the dominant worldview among the US left.¶ Do you really think that this is the best way to approach the industry, through mobilizing state resources?¶ Look, the fossil fuel industry is the most powerful force the world has ever seen. Be honest, what institution could possibly ~~stand up to~~ rebuff them? The state. That doesn’t mean it will. Right now, government is captured by these corporate entities. But, it has, at least in theory, an obligation to the people. And it also has the laws that we need to wipe out the fossil fuel industrial complex. This sounds fantastical and nuts, but I don’t think it is. I’ve been harping on this in articles and a little bit at the end of Tropic of Chaos. According to the Center for Biological Diversity, Nixon-era laws can be used to sue developers, polluters, etc. You might not be able to stop them, but you can slow them down. The Clean Air Act basically says that if science can show that smoke-stack pollution is harmful to human health, it has to be regulated.¶ If there was a movement really pushing the government, and making the argument that the only safe level of CO2 emissions is essentially zero … We have the laws in place. We have the enabling legislation to shut down the fossil fuel industry. We should use the government to levy astronomical fines on the fossil fuel companies for pollution. And we should impose them at such a level that it would undermine their ability to remain competitive and profitable.¶ Part Two:¶ Vincent Emanuele: Much of the green washing, or capitalism’s attempt to brand itself as green, focuses on localism and anti-government, market-driven programs. Do you think this phobia of the state among the US left is a result of previous failed political experiments? How much of this ideology is imposed from outside forces?¶ Christian Parenti: Some state phobia comes from the American political mythology of rugged individualism; some comes from the fundamentally Southern, Jeffersonian tradition of states’ rights. Fear of the federal government by Southern elites goes back to the founding of the country. The Hamiltonian versus Jeffersonian positions on government are fundamental to understanding American politics. I wrote about this for Jacobin magazine in a piece called "Reading Hamilton from the Left."¶ Lurking just beneath the surface of states’ rights is, of course, plantation rights. Those plantations, places like Monticello, were America’s equivalent of feudal manors where, in a de facto sense, economic, legal and military power were all bound up together and located in the private household of the planter. Those Virginian planters were the original localistas.¶ Nor did that project end with the fall of slavery, or the end of de jure segregation in the 1960s. Southern elites didn’t want Yankees telling them what to do; how to treat their slaves, how to organize their towns, how to run their elections, how to treat the environment – none of that! The South is a resource colony and its regional elites, some of them now running multinational corporations and holding important posts in the US government, believe they have a right to do what they wish with the people and landscape. Historically, that’s a large part of what localism and local democracy meant in the South. It meant that White local elites were "free" – free to push Black people around, free to feed racist fantasies to the White working class. They didn’t want interference from the outside. So, some of that anti-statist ideology comes from that plantation tradition. Another part of it comes from the real failures and crimes of state socialism, though state socialism also had, and in Cuba still has, many successes. The social welfare record of what we used to call "actually existing socialism" was pretty impressive. But there were also the problems of repression, surveillance and bureaucratization, which were partly the result of capitalist encirclement, partly the result of the ideological hubris rooted in ideological overconfidence in the allegedly scientific power of Marxism, partly the result of simple corruption among socialism’s political class. These real problems were central themes in the Cold War West’s educational and ideological apparatus of (generally right-wing) messaging from the press and the political class. In this discourse, communism was the state, while freedom was the private sector. Thus, the United States and freedom became embodied in popular notions of the private sector and individualism.¶ Of course, the great, unmentioned contradiction in this self-fantasy is the fact that American capitalism has always been heavily, heavily dependent on the state. Modern society, despite its fantasies about itself, is intensely cooperative and collective. Look at how complex its physical systems are; that cannot be achieved without massive levels of coordination and collective cooperation, much of it provided by the rules and regulations of government. The knee-jerk anti-statism, what the folks at Jacobin call "anarcho-liberalism," is also rooted in experience. The less social power you have, the more the state is experienced as an invasive, demeaning, oppressive and potentially, very violent bureaucracy. Neoliberalism would not have gotten this far if there wasn’t an element of truth to this critique of its bureaucracy and regulation. It has also used ideas that have old cultural tractions, like freedom.¶ Such are the contradictions of the modern democratic state in capitalist society. Government is rational, supportive, humane, [and offers] redistribution in the form of Social Security, high-quality public schools, environmental regulation, the Voting Rights Act and other federal civil rights laws that have helped break hegemonic power of local and regional bigots. But government is also militarized policing, the bloated prison system, spying on a vast scale; it is child protective services taking children from loving mothers on the basis of bureaucratic traps, corrupt corporate welfare at every level from town government to federal military contracting. The racist, sexist, plutocratic and techno-bureaucratic features of the state create fertile ground for people to turn their backs on the whole idea of government. What has been the impact of the right’s ability to effectively propagandize the White working class in the US?¶ Rightist intellectuals, academics, journalists, media tycoons, university presidents and loudmouth politicians work diligently to capture and form the raw experience of everyday oppression into an ideological common sense. To be clear, I use that term in the Gramscian sense, in which common sense refers to ruling class ideology that is so hegemonic as to be absorbed and naturalized by the people. The constant libertarian assault on the radio, in newspapers, on the television, this drumbeat of anti-government discourse is an old story – but still very important for understanding the anarcho-liberal sensibility. Just tune in to AM radio late on a weekday evening and listen to the anti-government vitriol. It’s sort of wild.¶ Someone could do an interesting study, Ph.D., in unpacking the cultural history of all this. It is tempting to speculate that deindustrialization, having disempowered and made anxious many huge sections of the working class, opens the way for fantasies of empowerment. The anti-statist, rugged individualist common sense is also always simultaneously a fantasy of empowerment. White men are particularly vulnerable to these fantasies. The classic guy who calls into the batshit crazy, late night, right-wing talk radio show is a middle-aged White man. Listen closely to the rage and you hear fantasies of independence. In this rhetoric, guns and gun rights become an obviously phallic symbol of individual empowerment, agency, self worth, responsibility etc. But most importantly, we have to think about how all of this anti-state ideology is being stirred up with investments from elites. The neoliberal project is to transform the state through anti-statist rhetoric and narratives. They sell the idea that people need to be liberated from the state. But then push policies that imprison people while liberating and pampering capital. It is hard for the left to see itself in this sketch – the angry, beaten-down, middle-aged White guy calling in from his basement or garage. But I think these much-documented corporate efforts to build neoliberal consent permeate the entire culture and infect us all, if even just a little bit.¶ This is the intellectually toxic environment in which young activists are approaching the question of the climate emergency. Young activists should be approaching the climate crisis the way the left approached the economic crisis during the Great Depression. We need to drastically restructure the state. We need it mobilized and able to transform the economy. The New Deal was imperfect, of course. It left domestic workers and farm workers out of the Fair Labor Standards Act. It was inherently racist. It dammed rivers and was environmentally destructive. However, the New Deal was radical in its general empowerment of labor; its distributional outcomes were progressive and it achieved a modernizing transformation of American capitalism. Not to overstate the case, but the New Deal could be a reference point for thinking about the beginning of a green transformation that seeks to euthanize the fossil fuel industry. We have to precipitously reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build a new power sector. That much is very clear.¶ However, let me be clear: Shutting down the fossil fuel industry – mitigating the climate crisis – is not a solution for the environmental crisis. Climate change is only one part of the multifaceted environmental crisis. Shutting down the fossil fuel industry would not automatically end overfishing, deforestation, soil erosion, habitat loss, toxification of the environment etc. But carbon mitigation is the most immediately pressing issue we face. The science is very clear on this. Climate change is the portion of the overall crisis that must be solved immediately so as to buy time to deal with all the other aspects of the crisis. Because I take the political implications of climate science very seriously, I am something of a carbon fundamentalist.

### L – Individualism

#### The aff’s politics cede the universal in favor of local, fragmented knowledge – our link is unique – their “micropolitics of resistance” are part and parcel of a leftist melancholia that fail to confront capitalism on the scale and scope required to build people power – even if their analytic is true in a vacuum, it trades off with the most effective socialist tactics

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There has been an excess of modesty in the feminist agendas of recent decades. Carol A. Stabile is amongst those who have been critical of an absence of systemic thinking within postmodern feminisms, remarking upon a “growing emphasis on fragmentations and single-issue politics.”1 Stabile dismisses this kind of thinking which, in “so resolutely avoiding ‘totalizing’—the bête noire of contemporary critical theory—[…] ignores or jettisons a structural analysis of capitalism.”2 The difference in scope and scale between that which is being opposed and the strategies being used to oppose it is generative of a sense of disempowerment. On the one hand, Stabile argues, postmodern social theorists “accept the systemic nature of capitalism, as made visible in its consolidation of power and its global expansion […] Capitalism’s power as a system is therefore identified and named as a totality”; on the other hand, these theorists “celebrate local, fragmented, or partial forms of knowledge as the only forms of knowledge available” and criticize big-picture speculative thinking for its potentially oppressive tendencies or applications.3 Nancy Fraser, too, has addressed this apparent “shrinking of emancipatory vision at the fin de siècle,” linking this with “a major shift in the feminist imaginary” during the 1980s and 1990s—that is, with a move away from attempting to remake political economy (redistribution) and towards an effort at transforming culture (recognition).4 The legacies of this kind of political theorizing—legacies some might describe as “folk political”—are still being felt today, and continue to shape the perceived horizons of possibility for progressive projects.5 Yet these projects, which are frequently valuable, necessary, and effective on their own terms, are not sufficient as ends in themselves. To the extent that they are conceptualized in detachment from an ecology of other interventions, operating via a diversity of means and across a variety of scales, they cannot serve as a suitable basis for any politics seeking to contest the imaginaries of the right or to contend with the expansive hegemonic project of neoliberal capitalism. It is for this reason that Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams’s work positions itself as somewhat skeptical about fragmentations and single-issue politics, pointing out that problems such as “global exploitation, planetary climate change, rising surplus populations, [and] the repeated crises of capitalism are abstract in appearance, complex in structure, and non-localized.”6 As such, a politics based around the ideas that “the local is ethical, simpler is better, the organic is healthy, permanence is oppressive, and progress is over” is not always the best weapon in an attempt to contend with the complex technomaterial conditions of the world as it stands.7 There is a persistent kind of abstraction anxiety hanging over progressive politics; an anxiety that haunts a contemporary leftist feminism still unwilling or unable to critically reappraise the tendencies that Stabile identified in the 90s. Recently, however, a renewed appetite for ambitious and future-oriented emancipatory politics has begun to make itself felt at the fringes of the left—and indeed, to gather momentum and popular support more broadly.8 Perhaps the most remarkable example of this tendency within philosophically-inflected political theory circles has been accelerationism, with its calls to build an “intellectual infrastructure” capable of “creating a new ideology, economic and social models, and a vision of the good to replace and surpass the emaciated ideals that rule our world today.”9 These so-called “Promethean” ideas have generated widespread interest, arguably both reflecting and contributing to the changing tenor of activist discourse. Interestingly, this term has to some extent emerged in opposition to the pejorative “folk political,” acting as a shorthand for a very different set of values and perspectives. In a recent critical piece, Alexander Galloway suggests that “Prometheanism” could be defined as “technology for humans to overcome natural limit.”10 Peter Wolfendale, meanwhile, sees it as a “politics of intervention”—one that starts from the insistence that nothing be exempted in advance from the enactment of re/visionary processes.11

### Alt – Communes

#### The alternative orients ourselves towards an Intercommunal understanding of the capitalist, imperial order of US military presence and the way it spans across global communities being occupied – this creates the possibility for liberation by connecting disparate struggles and providing a framework for envisioning a future beyond the status quo

**Heynan in 9** <Nik Heynen. “Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale” Annals of the Association of American Geographers Vol. 99, Iss. 2, 2009 [PhD (2002) Indiana University Geography, Prof @UGA]>

Part of realizing the historical geographical impor tance of scale is realizing how embedded it has been for so long as a political organizing strategy. This recog nition, however, brings with it the risk Smith (2005) points out when he suggests "if scale is everything, scale is nothin3g." With this risk in mind, however, the the oretical value of politics of scale will also be blunted if we do not continue to engage it as a lens to bet ter understand social reproduction and, in this case, survival. Related to scale, in one interview Bobby Seale suggested to me that, "We realized that regarding hunger, the breadcrumbs they [U.S. Keynesian welfare state] were throwing at us was only to pacify us, to keep us quiet. It wasn't to sustain us." As such, the BPP's survival programs were both initiated to sustain the social reproduction of their black community, starting at the scale of the individual body but also for the sake of building a political base that could be used to resist the hegemonic repression of the U.S. government and capitalist interests more broadly. The antagonistic rela tions regarding organizing at multiple scales but mostly grounded in the notion of the black community as they evolved through the BPP's history and tied directly to the Breakfast Program is really important for this story. In a seminal intervention about the politics of scale, Smith (1993) details some of the more commonly dis cussed spatial scales and shows how they relate to each other. About the "community scale," which is theoretically important for thinking about how the BPP used the notion of the black community with scaled slip page and the way in which Babylon bounced between scales, Smith (1993, 105) suggests "the community is properly conceived as the site of social reproduction, but the activities involved in social reproduction are so pervasive that the identity and spatial boundaries of community are often indistinct." He goes on to say, "Community is therefore the least defined of spatial scales, and the consequent vague yet generally affirma tive nurturing meaning attached to 'community' makes it one of the most ideologically appropriated metaphors in contemporary public discourse." During another interview, Bobby Seale illustrated how the BPP realized the importance of the Breakfast Program early on, when he suggested that in the first instance, feeding individuals was required for them to survive; in the second and third instances, these indi viduals, through different kinds of organizing, together provide the political basis of their black community. Seale used this term at different scales in different ways. He talked about how feeding children helped organize the black community within particular neighborhoods, helped organize the black community in cities, helped to organize the black community across states and in regions, and helped to organize the black community in nations across the world. Although never using the word "scale," Seale told me how the scalar relations in herent in antihunger politics and social reproduction are a result of the universality of human needs and how, by looking at different scalar configurations of these needs, we can imagine new forms of political organiz ing. This kind of organizing scalar logic is at the core of why the BPP talked about their survival programs within the context of "survival pending revolution." To this end, Newton said in 1970 (2002) "In order to exist, we must survive... if the people are not here revolu tion cannot be achieved, for the people and only the people make revolutions." Although that sounds just like "We need people for a revolution," it has deeper significance when we think of it within the context of how Newton began to talk about community and the notion of revolutionary intercommunalism in 1971 and 1972. Huey Newton, as chief theoretician and strategist of the BPP, began to discuss the scalar interconnected ness of the oppression of individuals in Oakland with the oppression of collective communities within which those individuals lived.7 These were the earliest no tions of what would be a short-lived endorsement of Black Nationalism. The connections he discussed were based both on the lack of basic welfare provision and the disciplinary tactics initiated by local, state, and federal law enforcement. Newton associated these local pro cesses with the need for oppressed people in the United States to form their own imaginary national identity and to support each other collectively.8 Notions about the welfare state became explicitly concretized within the everyday discussions of "survival" and articulated with the absence of concern among U.S. elites about the survival of inner-city minority residents. To survive and ensure social reproduction at a community scale, to, on the one hand, help sustain their communities and, on the other, begin to build a political base, the survival programs were initiated through not only considering the local impediments to organizing but also with an eye toward organizing nationally. While imprisoned for manslaughter following a shootout with Oakland police (the charges were later dropped), Huey Newton spent twenty-two months thinking about the foundations of the BPP's revolutionary praxis. Newton's commitment to the no tion of the black community, perhaps because of the scaled slippage that it contains, allowed him to imag ine the black community to exist not just in the local contexts of Oakland or Chicago but in more collec tively organized ways that could increase the impact of the BPP. His ideas evolved into what would remain one of his most provocative notions, that of revolu tionary intercommunalism. Newton argued that the United States was no longer a nation-state but had transformed into a boundless empire controlling all the world's lands and people through the mobilization of disciplining technologies and everyday mechanisms of the state. Because people and economies had become so integrated within the American Empire, Newton suggested it was impossible for them to "decolonize." Thus, spatially, collectives of people living in colo nized ghettos who were the most likely to support the BPP's political vision were stifled to such a degree as to make them politically ineffective. As such, new scalar formulations and efforts to mobilize grassroots support through the discourse of "you are connected to that rebel in Mozambique, so fight with us here in Oak land," for instance, were necessary because all the old models were useless given the degree to which the em pire had globalized. That is, Newton began to detail a spatial model in which the oppressed people of the world had to struggle in a collectively global, revolu tionary way. They had to organize from the base of their local communities to take back the control of economic, political, and cultural institutions. The spa tial logic of this notion rested, for Newton, in the fact that because oppressed people were scattered through a dispersed collection of communities, each with its own set of institutions geared toward serving the people and facilitating social reproduction, this dispersion had to be made whole through some sort of imagined spatial construct. David Hilliard (1993) summarizes Newton's notions of revolutionary intercommunalism as follows: In prison, Huey has developed an analysis of the present political movement. Nation-states, he argues are things of the past. Nationalist struggles, even revolutionary ones, are besides the point. Capital dominates the world; ig noring borders, international finance has transformed the world into communities rather than nations. Some of the communities are under siege like Vietnam and others conduct the siege, like the United States Govern ment. The people of the world are united in their de sire to run their own communities: the black people in Oakland and the Vietnamese. We need to band together as communities, create a revolutionary intercommunalism that will resist capital's reactionary intercommunalism. (319) As Newton theorized the idealized organizing spa tial framework for the BPP, the amended formulation results in an interesting splicing of the global and na tional scales in an effort to confound the hegemony of U.S. empire. This was because, according to Newton, nation-states did not matter anymore beyond their cere monial function. The complicated imagined scalar con figuration that resulted bolstered the BPP's revolution ary praxis by situating local communities, which they had already been fighting to command, as the premier sites of struggle. Here we see what Andy Jonas (1994, 262) has discussed as the "the language of scale is an anticipation of the future." Although the spatial practices inherent in Newton's ideas obviously precede Smith's (1990) notion of "pol itics of scale," they can be understood through them; these specific political struggles and social reconfigura tions led to interactions at a higher scale and over a wider, global terrain. Before a political, ideological, or material reconfiguration of politics at the global scale could occur, however, the BPP required a rearticulation of the local via community. Moving from an uncon solidated power base, they attempted to expand their territorial domain through many locally dispersed spa tial units. Newton's resulting notion of a global net work of interrelated communities "making spaces for themselves" via struggling against the oppression of U.S. empire is quite extraordinary. Beyond the impor tance of Newton's political thinking about scale are the material foundations and everyday relations of social reproduction on which his thoughts were based. To be sure, the Panther politics of scale as outlined by Newton had many negative ramifications for the BPP's ability to organize. Many who were in attendance when Newton initially discussed revolutionary intercommu nalism, most notably in a two-and-a-half-hour speech at Boston College in February 1971, felt that he was out of touch with what was happening on the street with the people. A former Panther who knew Newton well suggested to me, "I mean Huey, in many ways, was the troubled genius, but how do you think about revolu tionary social change in the U.S.? That's the ongoing issue, and on the one hand there was for me, a fasci nating theory of revolutionary intercommunalism but then somewhat more practically, there was the idea of the survival programs." Other interviews I have con ducted suggest an inability of many BPP members, po tential BPP members, and others interested in the BPP, to see the linkages between Newton's scalar theoriza tions and the survival programs. When I pressed one male former Panther about whether there was a link between Newton's scalar theorizing and practice within the BPP, he suggested: Frankly, I don't think so. Unless Huey had a deeper vi sion than I'm aware. There's a quote by George Jackson about building an infrastructure capable of fielding a peo ple's army, and I always thought that was in some part the essence of what the organization was trying to do, and how do you build that infrastructure? You built the infras tructure through the survival programs. And it's amazing, if you want poor people to be at a certain place at a cer tain time, give away free food. It works. ... It was about organizing. Another female former Panther, who also knew Newton well and was very involved in operating a Breakfast Program, suggested: We believed in "practice was the criterion for truth." Now that, I do remember! So no matter how much you talked, no matter how much you theorized. . . you were like, "Did you read Huey Netwon's treatise on blah-blah-blah?" "Uh, no." [laughter] You know, because you're already there: feeding children, you're walking door to door selling the paper,. . . people are asking you . . . maybe they're having a community meeting about something that's paramount to them in the neighborhood at the center. . . you're liv ing it. So whether or not he saw that, you know, being in jail, and not really being at the onset of the Break fast Program physically and all that, whether or not he actually saw these things in practice from his own orga nization and theorized about it, or whether it came first, I'm sorry, I couldn't tell you. But I do know that once you engage in community programmatic activity, there's just nothing like it in this world, and I think that it's a major, it's solved so many problems, it really could. Like I say, now children do have lunch in schools, which is major! Major. And if it hadn't been... I actually believe the breakfast for school children program. . . young peo ple getting up. . . knocking on the doors of stores, go ing in stores, and literally, not begging, but trying to encourage the store owners to give us a pound of bacon, which they faithfully did. So now you have our tax dollars at least going towards something that's positive, in one respect. These comments highlight the problematic divide within revolutionary praxis, between theory and prac tice more generally. But then again, I guess revolution is messy business! While the connections between theory and organiz ing practice as related to revolutionary intercommu nalism were ramping up in complex ways in 1971, by 1972 the BPP tried to articulate the spatial organiz ing practices that would be necessary for an actually existing revolutionary intercommunalism to come into being. Interestingly, in so concretizing their plan, they simultaneously highlighted how Newton's imagining of spatial politics was explicitly based in scaled slippages and the elasticity of community. This moment is most importantly marked by a headline that was on the front page of The Black Panther newspaper in the summer of 1972: "Oakland?A Base of Operation!" As the base of operation for the BPP's revolution ary intercommunal politics, Oakland served as an ideal local example of what to strive for in other commu nities that sought solidarity with this spatial strategy. Here, the BPP undoubtedly positioned itself spatially, as it had done previously in other rhetorical ways, as the vanguard of "the" revolution. Because of Oakland's history as a colonized local space, which through grass roots organizing had created alternative models of so cial reproduction through their survival strategies, their example of community in this sense was very impor tant. They were able to put forth a model that demon strated local solidarity and a much energized grassroots base. Despite the confusion that people read into New ton's discussion of revolutionary intercommunalism in 1971 and early 1972, it seemed it simultaneously, and to some degree in contradiction, made progress through the connection to on-the-ground politics in Oakland. Newton made headway through the case of Oakland because as an organizer he was committed to the visible politics carried out to shape local space. Although this vision is inherent in some of the logic of the survival programs, it became even clearer as larger solidarities and networking, beyond the BPP, began to occur. For instance?and Self (2003) does a splendid job of going deeper into this moment?there emerged a conflict in political philosophy between the BPP's desire to engage in public, very visible politics, and the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), which argued that revo lutionary politics had to occur underground through more subversive and violent means. Newton's dismissal of an underground and violent approach was based in what he perceived to be the disconnection between the material impact of those kinds of politics and how ev eryday grassroots people discursively understood their impact. As Self (2003, 302) suggests about this tension, "But Newton and other party insiders had long believed that the principal problem with late-twentieth century radicalism was its abstractness and distance from the material experience of ordinary people." This emphasis on visible direct action politics, as a means of organizing from a local base and stretching the spatial boundaries of the black community to in clude all the other communities oppressed by empire, demonstrates an interesting set of thinking about scale. I would argue, however, what is more important about this spatial logic is that it is grounded in the social re production and survival of the people that make up a community, however defined, at any scale. Perhaps one of the most clear political or scalar dis courses I came across within this organizing context related to Eldridge Cleaver's (n.d.) outline of the di mensions of "community imperialism." The historical context suggests it came before Newton's full unveil ing of revolutionary intercommunalism, but the simi larity of logic surrounding the elasticity of community offers insight into the spatial connections among the U.S. state, the black community, the white suburbs, and the kinds of collective consciousness about these scaled relationships necessary for meaningful political progress. Cleaver (n.d., 1) began his essay by suggesting, "In our struggle for national liberation, we are now in the phase of community liberation, to free black com munities from the imperialistic control exercised over them by the racist exploiting cliques within white com munities, to free our people, locked up as they are in Urban Dungeons, from the imperialism of the white suburbs." He went on to say: We say that we are working for our national liberation, and in order to achieve that we must have a univer sal national consciousness within our people. But before we can really tackle that monumental job, an essential step is to achieve community liberation, we must have a solid community consciousness. A community that year in and year out allows itself to be ~~raped~~ damaged politically is not consciousness. (1) Given the rendering of the ghetto as a colonized space, the revolutionary and anticolonial thinking by theorists including Marx and Engels, Lenin, Mao, Fanon, Guevara, Castro, and Nkrumah seems like a logical stream of thought to have influenced the BPP. Although the overall influence of these thinkers, and their own political struggles, might have been limited in its internalization by BPP members, the history of rev olutionary struggle is easy to connect to when living in such oppressive conditions. Through engaging in their revolutionary intercommunalism, they contributed to producing new revolutionary groups working against oppression across the world. Bobby Seale told me that as one of the main organizers of the BPP, he infrequently talked to international organizers and grassroots polit ical activists about how to set up free food programs. In at least England, Bermuda, Israel, Belize, Australia, and India, groups claiming to have emulated the rev olutionary praxis of the BPP set up free food programs (also see Clemons and Jones 2001). So although theory is always important at some level, the necessary connec tion between thinking and action is made clear in the BPP's history, just as within the biographical struggles of Marx, Castro, Guevara, and Nkrumah. Interesting, as far as thinking about the gender politics of the BPP, but not surprising given the patriarchy projected through the BPP, is the lack of noted influences of revolutionary women like Harriet Tubman, Rosa Luxemburg, Emma Goldman, or Lucy Parsons.

### Alt – Party Politics

#### **The alternative is to organize around the party as a means to create dual power that caters to educate and mobilize marginalized communities, and connect local struggles to a movement for international liberation – the party is able to self-correct violent practices with accountability**

Escalante 18 [Alyson 9-21-2018 Forge News Party Organizing In The 21st Century https://theforgenews.org/2018/09/21/party-organizing-in-the-21st-century/ Accessed 1-17-2019] CSUF JmB

In my previous article for The Forge, Against Electoralism For Dual Power, I argued that it is necessary to forward a base building strategy over and against the current electoral strategy which dominates the socialist movement in the United States. I recommend reading that article before reading this one, as this is meant to expand on that article. My emphasis in that article was demonstrating that Lenin’s theory of the state is still relevant to our contemporary concerns. I argued that instead of focusing on electing candidates to official positions within the bourgeois state, we ought to build socialist institutions which can meet the needs of the working class and oppressed masses. This idea is not particularly novel, and has been forwarded by many thinkers within the broader base building movement in the United States. Tim Horras and Sophia Burns have both written prolifically on this strategy, and their work has helped to popularize the base building tendency. This emerging tendency has adopted a fairly big tent approach. Base building strategy can be found within multiple organizations including the Democratic Socialists of America, portions of the Party for Socialism and Liberation, and within the litany of local and autonomous parties and organizations affiliated with the Marxist Center network. Because of the eclectic nature of the base building movement, there is an open question as to what sorts of organizational model will come to the forefront of the movement. While base builders can agree on the need for building socialist institutions, there is still room to debate how such institutions should be built. One of the prominent criticisms of the base building movement forwarded by Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theorists in particular has focused on the lack of party organizing within the movement. These criticisms have largely argued that without a unified party, base building simply creates “red charities” which only meet the needs of the masses, while failing to organize, radicalize, and lead the masses. Furthermore, these criticisms have focused on a failure to publicly emphasize the revolutionary nature of base building. Critics from the left have claimed that the base building movements creates a sort of mutualism which settles for mutual aid as a parallel economy to capitalism, and which lacks a means of transitioning from dual power to unitary socialist power. My goal here is not to forward a defense of base building tactics in light of these criticisms. Most who are involved with the movement have made it clear that the goal is not a prolonged situation of dual power and parallel economies, but is socialist revolution. Base builders have been clear that dual power is a strategy which has to lead to revolution. The goal is to eventually establish unitary power in the hands of the working class. Sophia Burns, one of the more prominent and prolific theorists in the base building movement, has put forth an important and crucial response to such criticisms in her article Revolution Is Not a Metaphor. I am not going to rehash ideas which have already been forwarded by exceptional theorists. My goal here is to take these criticisms seriously and to suggest that the base building movement ought to pursue party organizing as a means of avoiding the potential pitfalls of mutualism. The critics of base building are correct that if base building settles for building socialist institutions which simply function as a cooperative oriented alternative to capitalism, then base building strategy fails to be sufficiently revolutionary. I do not think that this description of base building accurately reflects the work being done within the movement. The individual organizations which constitute the movement often have close working relationships with groups like the Socialist Rifle Association and John Brown Gun Club to ensure that oppressed communities are capable of arming themselves and competently defending themselves. Such work indicates that a serious militant stance exists within the base building movement. Individual organizations have undertaken various strategies to ensure that the dual power organizations they are building are tied to a broader systemic critique of capitalism and an emphasis on revolutionary socialism. The fact that most base building organizers do not simply enter into coalition work, but rather found their own revolutionary socialist organizations to organize around, demonstrates that base builders have an understanding of the need for revolutionary organizations instead of an unorganized conglomeration of socialist institutions with no broader plan for overcoming capitalism. It remains, however, somewhat unclear what organizational structures will emerge from the movement . The Marxist Center network remains a loose coalition of organizations, but there have been calls for formal national unity, and unification will be debated at the upcoming Marxist Center conference in December. Base builders within the DSA have been working not only to create dual power institutions at the local level, but also to take positions of power within DSA national to create a national movement. The DSA Refoundation caucus, a group of revolutionary Marxists associated with the base building movement, have explicitly stated that their goal is to produce “ a mass, independent socialist party in the US.” Debate and theorizing around organizational structure must necessarily occur as talk of unification and establishing a national tendency emerges. The Need For A Party: I would argue that within the base building movement, there is a move towards party organizing, but this trend has not always been explicitly theorized or forwarded within the movement. My goal in this essay is to argue that base building and dual power strategy can be best forwarded through party organizing, and that party organizing can allow this emerging movement to solidify into a powerful revolutionary socialist tendency in the United States. One of the crucial insights of the base building movement is that the current state of the left in the United States is one in which revolution is not currently possible. There exists very little popular support for socialist politics. A century of anticommunist propaganda has been extremely effective in convincing even the most oppressed and marginalized that communism has nothing to offer them. The base building emphasis on dual power responds directly to this insight. By building institutions which can meet people’s needs, we are able to concretely demonstrate that communists can offer the oppressed relief from the horrific conditions of capitalism. Base building strategy recognizes that actually doing the work to serve the people does infinitely more to create a socialist base of popular support than electing democratic socialist candidates or holding endless political education classes can ever hope to do. Dual power is about proving that we have something to offer the oppressed. The question, of course, remains: once we have built a base of popular support, what do we do next? If it turns out that establishing socialist institutions to meet people’s needs does in fact create sympathy towards the cause of communism, how can we mobilize that base? Put simply: in order to mobilize the base which base builders hope to create, we need to have already done the work of building a communist party. It is not enough to simply meet peoples needs. Rather, we must build the institutions of dual power in the name of communism. We must refuse covert front organizing and instead have a public face as a communist party. When we build tenants unions, serve the people programs, and other dual power projects, we must make it clear that we are organizing as communists, unified around a party, and are not content simply with establishing endless dual power organizations. We must be clear that our strategy is revolutionary and in order to make this clear we must adopt party organizing. By “party organizing” I mean an organizational strategy which adopts the party model. Such organizing focuses on building a party whose membership is formally unified around a party line determined by democratic centralist decision making. The party model creates internal methods for holding party members accountable, unifying party member action around democratically determined goals, and for educating party members in communist theory and praxis. A communist organization utilizing the party model works to build dual power institutions while simultaneously educating the communities they hope to serve. Organizations which adopt the party model focus on propagandizing around the need for revolutionary socialism. They function as the forefront of political organizing, empowering local communities to theorize their liberation through communist theory while organizing communities to literally fight for their liberation. A party is not simply a group of individuals doing work together, but is a formal organization unified in its fight against capitalism. Party organizing has much to offer the base building movement. By working in a unified party, base builders can ensure that local struggles are tied to and informed by a unified national and international strategy. While the most horrific manifestations of capitalism take on particular and unique form at the local level, we need to remember that our struggle is against a material base which functions not only at the national but at the international level. The formal structures provided by a democratic centralist party model allow individual locals to have a voice in open debate, but also allow for a unified strategy to emerge from democratic consensus. Furthermore, party organizing allows for local organizations and individual organizers to be held accountable for their actions. It allows criticism to function not as one independent group criticizing another independent group, but rather as comrades with a formal organizational unity working together to sharpen each others strategies and to help correct chauvinist ideas and actions. In the context of the socialist movement within the United States, such accountability is crucial. As a movement which operates within a settler colonial society, imperialist and colonial ideal frequently infect leftist organizing. Creating formal unity and party procedure for dealing with and correcting these ideas allows us to address these consistent problems within American socialist organizing. Having a formal party which unifies the various dual power projects being undertaken at the local level also allows for base builders to not simply meet peoples needs, but to pull them into the membership of the party as organizers themselves. The party model creates a means for sustained growth to occur by unifying organizers in a manner that allows for skills, strategies, and ideas to be shared with newer organizers. It also allows community members who have been served by dual power projects to take an active role in organizing by becoming party members and participating in the continued growth of base building strategy. It ensures that there are formal processes for educating communities in communist theory and praxis, and also enables them to act and organize in accordance with their own local conditions. We also must recognize that the current state of the base building movement precludes the possibility of such a national unified party in the present moment. Since base building strategy is being undertaken in a number of already established organizations, it is not likely that base builders would abandon these organizations in favor of founding a unified party. Additionally, it would not be strategic to immediately undertake such complete unification because it would mean abandoning the organizational contexts in which concrete gains are already being made and in which growth is currently occurring. What is important for base builders to focus on in the current moment is building dual power on a local level alongside building a national movement. This means aspiring towards the possibility of a unified party, while pursuing continued local growth. The movement within the Marxist Center network towards some form of unification is positive step in the right direction. The independent party emphasis within the Refoundation caucus should also be recognized as a positive approach. It is important for base builders to continue to explore the possibility of unification, and to maintain unification through a party model as a long term goal. In the meantime, individual base building organizations ought to adopt party models for their local organizing. Local organizations ought to be building dual power alongside recruitment into their organizations, education of community members in communist theory and praxis, and the establishment of armed and militant party cadres capable of defending dual power institutions from state terror. Dual power institutions must be unified openly and transparently around these organizations in order for them to operate as more than “red charities.” Serving the people means meeting their material needs while also educating and propagandizing. It means radicalizing, recruiting, and organizing. The party model remains the most useful method for achieving these ends. The use of the party model by local organizations allows base builders to gain popular support, and most importantly, to mobilize their base of popular support towards revolutionary ends, not simply towards the construction of a parallel economy which exists as an end in and of itself. It is my hope that we will see future unification of the various local base building organizations into a national party, but in the meantime we must push for party organizing at the local level. If local organizations adopt party organizing, it ought to become clear that a unified national party will have to be the long term goal of the base building movement. Many of the already existing organizations within the base building movement already operate according to these principles. I do not mean to suggest otherwise. Rather, my hope is to suggest that we ought to be explicit about the need for party organizing and emphasize the relationship between dual power and the party model. Doing so will make it clear that the base building movement is not pursuing a cooperative economy alongside capitalism, but is pursuing a revolutionary socialist strategy capable of fighting capitalism. The long term details of base building and dual power organizing will arise organically in response to the conditions the movement finds itself operating within. I hope that I have put forward a useful contribution to the discussion about base building organizing, and have demonstrated the need for party organizing in order to ensure that the base building tendency maintains a revolutionary orientation. The finer details of revolutionary strategy will be worked out over time and are not a good subject for public discussion. I strongly believe party organizing offers the best path for ensuring that such strategy will succeed. My goal here is not to dictate the only possible path forward but to open a conversation about how the base building movement will organize as it transitions from a loose network of individual organizations into a unified socialist tendency. These discussions and debates will be crucial to ensuring that this rapidly growing movement can succeed

## Case

### 1NC – Shulman

#### Their politics lead to burn out - political participation isn’t a trap, it’s necessary to achieve progressive interests.

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In turn, radical democrats may refuse his reduction of politics to sovereignty, but if we then identify the properly political as nonsovereign action, as nonrule or (fugitive) refusal to be governed, we remain captive to this demonic picture of power and its idealized other. By affirming only the “power to” of solidarity and action in concert, we risk disavowing power “over,” as participation in rule, as explicit rule-making, and as “ruling out” antidemocratic interests and practices. Do we imagine that generativity thrives only by refusing rule, and not also through forms of structure and even imposition, as parents and teachers know? As Prospero, a personification of both sovereignty and theory, finally acknowledged Caliban as the “dark thing” he must “own as mine,” the trope of fugitivity entails a disavowed remainder, the problem of power and rule, which needs to be acknowledged. For freedom requires not only flight from rule, but flight into it, as a problem that no one can escape, but that a democratic politics explicitly acknowledges and undertakes to rework by participatory practices of contest.40

Using Moten’s own idiom, I would ask: “What if” we do not dichotomize the informal assembly and praxis of fugitive sociality, and politics-as-rule predicated on exclusion and regulation of difference? “What if” a democratic theory must blur the social and political but also acknowledge inescapable, fraught, yet potentially fruitful tensions—between tacit grammar and explicit acts of translation, between informal form and organized forms of power, between fugitive aliveness as resistance to rule, and organizing democratic power to make claims on how the world is ruled? “What if” we refuse (not reverse) the abstract polarity between subjection to sovereign rule as such, or statelessness as refusal to be governed as such, and “come down to earth” as Marx put it? We then find politicality not in rule or nonrule, as such, but in the judgments and actions by which subalterns address who makes decisions (and how) about which practices, values, and inequalities are being ruled out, or which encouraged, in the communities they are building by socio-poetic insurgency? In difficult historical contexts they rework and mediate tacit grammars, customary practices, and explicit forms of organized power as they reconstitute democratic forms of rule-making.41

These what-ifs suggest a conversation between Moten and Sheldon Wolin. The parallels are striking. Wolin depicts a “system” so “immovable and interconnected as to be unreformable as a totality”; he calls “pessimism” a “reasoned insight” and “suppressed revolutionary impulse”; and he endorses a “rejectionism” whereby citizens “withdraw and direct their energies and civic commitment to finding new life forms.” Moreover, “instead of imitating most political theories,” which adopt “the state as the primary structure, and adapt the activity of citizens” to it, Wolin refuses “the state paradigm” and the “liberal-legal corruption of the citizen.” He affirms how “common life resides in cooperation and reciprocity that human beings develop to survive, meet their needs, and explore their capacities and the remarkable world into which they have been cast.” He thus rejects Arendt’s splitting of political and social, and her valorization of the “who,” and in Moten’s terms he instead values how “entanglement and virtuosity” are negotiated in the “common life” of the ordinary. Both theorists thus defend “preservation” of customary ways of “taking care of beings and things,” as Wolin says, against neoliberal correction, progressive promises of incorporation, and radical romances of emancipation.42

Moten’s two antagonisms—between the few who run things and things that run, and between informal form and formalization—echo Wolin’s critique of bureaucracy, of “institutionalized systems of power,” and of “constitutional democracy”; and Moten’s refusals resonate with Wolin’s late claim that democracy names not a form of government but “fugitive” moments of insurgency. And though Wolin seems to mean “fugitive” only in its temporal sense of transient or fleeting, he also depicts democracy as interdicted by idioms of governance, contained by constitutions and organized power, and pathologized by norms stipulating the legal and proper. Like blackness—though Wolin never makes this association—his democracy is (called) criminal, transgressive, and chaotic; it is feared, hunted, and enclosed, though also “wanted,” desired, and used for legitimation. Both theorists embrace such epithets while showing how insurgency bespeaks “jurisgenerative” energies, engendered by commonality and memory, that precede and surround formal (state-centric) politics. Their fugitive protagonists—an undercommons or popular insurgency—claim a spatial and symbolic distance from a deranged modern regime, and in Wolin’s words “replace the old citizenship” by “a fuller and wider notion of being, whose politicalness will be expressed not in one or two activities—voting or protesting—but in many.” Of course, this very “politicalness” is one mark of deep differences.43

Though Wolin’s awareness of racial inequality appears in repeated associations of democratic moments and social movements with black insurgency, he does not grasp how “commonality” names not (only) a resource against enclosure but the historical production of whiteness and settler colonialism. He laments the gap between formal citizenship and genuine participation, which effectively disempowers legally enfranchised citizens, but never construes citizenship as a racial status, “standing” as white, constituted by a racial state of exception. His hard-pressed “citizens” draw on tacit (local, rooted) customs, but he does not credit how their “commonality” reproduces popular power by racial terror. Moten thus brings to this idiom of commonality and democracy, as to Arendt’s “common sense” and “world,” a justified presumption that such predicates of the political mean antiblackness. But acknowledging this truth is also the premise of thinking abolition and radical democracy together.44

For if Wolin’s commonality risks racial innocence, his idea of the political remains essential because it highlights the foreclosures in Moten’s sociality. First, Wolin depicts both tacit commonality and explicit insurgency as contingent and, in that sense, as political. Whereas Moten depicts sociality underwritten by ontology, and reproduced as antiblackness generates “common habitation and flight,” Wolin sees every (under)common undone by political economy and individualism, not only by incorporation into formal politics. Whereas Moten imagines the “absolute sufficiency” of sociality informally reproduced, Wolin argues that commonality itself is (re)generated and remade only by practices that, though “emerging out of” sociality, politicize— acknowledge, (re)articulate, or (re)organize—tacit customs and vernacular memories. Tacit commonalty is at once discovered, remade and regenerated only people make explicit claims in “public declarations,” or visibly exercise “collective power” to “promote or protect the well-being” of a “collectivity,” including an undercommon.45

Second, Wolin also links and distinguishes sociality and politicality by depicting the experience and practice of sharing and exercising power. For Wolin, local or customary “institutions and practices are sustained” only by our “capacity to share in power, to cooperate in it.” “Power to,” generated and shared by the ongoing practices of assembly and cooperation that Moten calls planning, is thus the basis of all other goods. But, as “distilled” from the “relations and circles we move within”—call this Moten’s sociality—this power, at once “symbolic, material, and psychological,” “enables political beings to act together.” As the political dimension of sociality, “power” can be extracted by states or undermined by individualism, and thus alienated, a loss that devitalizes the solidarity—and thereby the generative capacity—of sociality. The recurring “loss of the political,” as capacities to articulate the tacit and organize power, reveals the nature of the political as a distinctive “mode of experience,” for “we are always losing it and having to recover it.” But “renewal” is always possible, partly “as human beings rediscover the common being of human beings,” partly by “creating new patterns of commonality” across differences, and partly by (re)making “modes of action” by which to “concert their powers.” Though grounded in sociality, Wolin’s political thus opens an interval between the tacit and the explicit, in which experience is metabolized and (re)articulated. In this interval people question the organization of power and rules of justice, and they answer as they “reinvent forms and practices” that express “a democratic conception of collective life.”46

For Moten, of course, “democratic” and collective” signal the alienated rule that abstracts from lived sociality to “designate” a political to represent us, whereas black fugitives refuse to be governed or represented by others but also to translate themselves into legible political terms. In contrast, Wolin offers a potentially fruitful, not only correctional or appropriative—we might say agonistic—relation between the tacit and the explicit. In fact, practices of “fugitive democracy” recurrently emerge in and from black sociality, as the practices of Black Lives Matter activism most recently demonstrate. For sure, practices of concealment and evasion, which defend black fugitivity from surveillance, regulatory correction, and violence, and practices of public action that engage whites and the state, are contradictory in crucial ways, as Juliet Hooker has argued. But as Rom Coles and Lia Haro argue, frontline communities on the underground railroad also engaged repeatedly in “flagrantly public” action in concert, both in literal self-defense of black autonomy in its fugitive illegality, and to contest the rule(s) of police, the law, and the state; as recent protests suggest, they viewed formal political institutions both as “integral to white supremacy so far,” but also “as potential instruments toward emancipatory ends.”47

If Hooker sees temporal shifts between moments of “black fugitivity” and moments of “fugitive democracy” in the thought and practice of Frederick Douglass, Coles/Haro depict an ongoing “oscillation” between inward-facing and outward-turning practices. Likewise, Neil Roberts defends grand marronage for seeking a “sustainable rather than fleeting form of flight” by forging autonomous spaces, and yet, because “freedom in our world lies not in permanent evasion of Leviathan” but in “taming” it, he proposes an idea of “sociogenic marronage” to reconstruct “an order in need of systemic repair.” Not coincidentally, Wolin’s fugitive democracy, though “rejectionist” and antistatist in its major chords, includes a social democratic minor key, which notes the limits of localism and the necessity of seeking and using state power to address structural inequality and collective fate.48

Complex and generative tensions are lost, then, as Moten recovers the freedom schools organized by Fannie Lou Hamer but not her organizing for the right to vote, to exercise popular sovereignty locally, especially around police and schools, but also to create a “Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party” that entered national politics. Hamer (like the Black Panthers and Black Lives Matter) models how black radicalism has lived in an interval between the tacit grammar and ongoing “planning” of black fugitivity—as loopholes of retreat practiced and concealed in plain sight—and flagrant publicity as fugitive democracy. Whereas for Moten, the historical failure or defeat of outward-facing public action proves the futility of fugitive democracy, I would ask: “what if” we follow his own fugitive view that any being or act is both incomplete and excessive, to infer that specific historical experiments are not definitive failures, but unfinished in meaning, examples we could retrieve and refashion now? If keeping open such possibility risks cruel optimism, foreclosing it reifies the impasse he generatively transvalues in so many other ways.

#### Embracing the Undercommons sabotages activism and reproduces inequality - logistics can be retooled for progressive politics

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In The Undercommons, politics is the “radiation” of critique because critique identifies deficiency to promote “self-possession” in “political” forms of self-determination, but politics and critique are both lethal because their goal is inherently “correctional” and their practices are both parasitic on and appropriative of tacit life. In Moten’s trilogy, politics is also depicted as enforcing the metaphysics of the subject, and thereby antiblackness, and both are enshrined as “sovereignty” is democratized in personal and political terms—as possessive individualism, as political self-determination, as proper membership in a bounded “political body” or state.

This argument enables Moten and Harney to declare that the Black Panthers “theorized revolution without politics”—that is, “with neither a subject nor a principle of decision”—by practicing “ongoing planning” and “contrapuntal study of and in the commonwealth, poverty, and blackness of the surround” (UC, 18). This claim splits wholly “toxic” politics from idealized sociality, as if the Panthers did not organize a party, define authority, exercise organizational power, undertake public engagements with political institutions and white society, and claim popular sovereignty as a collective black subject. Moten and Harney honor Panther agonism toward white institutions when they say “we don’t want to be correct, and we won’t be corrected. Politics proposes to make us better, but we were good already,” yet they do not credit how Panthers, to overcome slavery’s damaging legacy, endorsed a self-correction they folded within profound affirmation of black value (UC, 20). By shifting the revolutionary from politics to sociality, by depicting Panthers engaged only in planning as social reproduction but not in politics, their agonistic refusal to be governed appears only against “politics,” not as a politics or a tension within politics. What shall we make of this?

The Undercommons offers “planning” and “study” as “toys” and “props to play with” (UC, 105), making the text a transitional space in which radical democrats and critical theorists can “study” their own practice of politics and theory. The premise of this play is not so much argued as assumed; every institution in modern liberal civil society enacts a foundational racial antagonism in their norms and material practices. This plausible premise generates a logic whereby self-defense by public engagement or organized power seems not even risky but inherently self-defeating, and any effort to argue against this inference bespeaks both white privilege and cruel optimism. I would credit the premise but render the inferences contestable and situational—politically contingent rather than logically entailed.30

On the one hand, the logic posits a frontier of antagonism, which requires “self-defense” of sociality as a revolutionary treasure. Moten’s “assumption [is] that politics, insofar as it is predicated upon the exclusion and regulation of difference, will have always been the scene of our degradation and never the scene of our redemption, redress, or repair” (BB, 256). The danger in “politics” is not only violent occupation by sovereign rule exercised as exclusion and regulation, nor only “democratizing” rule in the form of achieving subject status by recognition and representation. Politicization is itself also a problem. Partly, claims about justice involve harm and remedy in ways that presume the grammar of the subject and the cruel optimism of recognition that Moten refuses on behalf of black vitality. Mobilizing life as protest also devalues aliveness as if mere life, acquiescent, inarticulate, deficient if not abject—unless translated into explicit, intelligible claim-making. Moten thus asks, “can marginality be de-politicized?”—because its integrity and generativity are jeopardized by interpellation into purportedly political speech and public forms of action.

By saying “insofar as politics is predicated on rule,” however, does he open a space for politics predicated otherwise? After all, fugitive sociality is world-building in ways he also calls public and puts in grammatical proximity to the political: “As life which has been stolen steals away,” so a “kind of impossible publicness emerges through radical exclusion from the political,” and by refusing the status of subject and citizen that has been refused. (SL, xii). How he plays on but refuses the meanings of “political” is demonstrated by an amazing section in Stolen Life, “Air Shaft, Rent Party,” which begins, “I’m here to announce the formation of a new political party” that “is new because it’s not political” (SL, 189–90).

On the one hand, it is characterized by fugitive ambivalence:

Even though the party is, and takes place in, and takes place as a kind of refuge, refuge still indicates that those who take it are refugees and people tend not to want to have to live like that. It’s all messed up, though, because tremendous amounts of love are circulated in refuge so you can’t leave ‘cause your heart is there. But insofar as you’re always dreaming about leaving, which is to say that insofar as you’re always leaving, you can’t stay cause you been somewhere else.

Living in two times and places at once, and between loving and leaving the “impossible publicness” of a refuge, this “party” dreams of ending fugitive status while celebrating the ethos it generates.31

On the other hand, therefore:

This new party . . . could be called the house party, but don’t let that mislead you into thinking that house implies ownership: this house party is of and for the dispossessed, the ones who disavow possession, the ones who, in having been possessed of the spirit of dispossession, disrupt themselves. They’re preoccupied with disowning, with unowning. . . . This is the party of the ones who are not self-possessed. . . . So you see what I mean when I say that this new political party is not a political party . . . [but] an extra-political . . . beforeandafterparty.

This before and after, pre- and post-, ante- and anti-, un- and extra-political “party,” in its disowning and unowning ethos, embodies the remainder left as waste by the properly political, the excess beyond its bounds. It is also a “new political party to end all political parties” because it is a “rent party” to sustain a house as refuge, partying to reproduce not only mere life but “the good life in difference.” Partly, that is “feeling each other in the place where we feel—because we bear—each other as differences . . . where the fleshly thing you might have wanted to call a body [is] moving in and with and through each other.” Partly, life in difference “is given in its most essential form” as “that ongoing giving of form we call the informal.” This “emergence of form in and from the informal is the city we’re always making . . . the city of plans . . . of passages . . . of stateless practice” (SL, 189–90).

If publicness is not rule “predicated on the exclusion and regulation of difference,” could it represent another kind of politics? Moten denies this. Still, he calls fugitive sociality “ante-political,” not only “anti-political,” and he sees “the more and less than political experience” of sociality as both “constitutive and disruptive of every political instance.” He even says “this condition that is before and against politics might become something akin to what good people have desired under the rubric of politics.” Indeed, “this terrible beauty [of fugitive sociality] works its wounded kinship to politics” (UM, 79). Kinship because politics is “derivative” of social capacities of assembly and imagination, but wounded because “any political body must exclude and disavow” what he calls “a necessarily social impropriety” (UM, 101). At issue is less “what constitutes political experience, but what antepolitical forces remain in the wake of political reduction and regulation” (UM, 107).

Moments of blur gesture toward a possibility that the fugitivity (or “antepolitical forces”) that Moten protects against “politics” (as reduction and regulation by rule) might be mobilized in or as a radically democratic politics, committed to practice rule or exercise power otherwise. After all, historical instances of grand marronage, or Native American and Zapatista politics now, also draw antistate frontiers to protect the ante-state integrity of self-organization on nonstatist terms, to protect (the blackness of) the margins by not reproducing (the whiteness of) the center. In these examples, grievous losses and grave dangers are lodged in self-possessive (propertied) individualism, organized (alienated) representation, and state-centric (political) institutions. What we might call the creative paranoia of fugitives thus enables turning away and self-defense on behalf of independent and reparative sociality. But Moten’s idealization of sociality appears in his differences from these examples.32

To begin with, though they affirm dispossession ethically, they contest it politically, and not only around land and resources. Native tribes, maroons, or Zapatista activists do not denounce sovereignty as such but instead reanimate inherited ideas to organize self-defense, rework democratic governance, and imagine community as a distinct political body. Likewise, refusing transcendental (liberal or sovereign) forms of “the subject” has not meant refusing any idea of bounded subjects in relation; instead, we see bounded (“relational”) selfhood lived differently when a community’s shared practices acknowledge its Dionysian undoing. Moreover, even if sociality is ontologically given as a “generative antagonism,” and embraced as our groundless ground, it is always-already, inescapably pervaded by antagonisms between those who run things and things that run. Moten repeatedly evokes the maternal to signal that the undercommon is suffused by mutual care and reproductive labors, but he wholly ignores divisions entailed by inequalities of class, gender, or homophobia. Or rather, instead of directly addressing class and gender inequality in the black world, he invokes the reality of a common condition that wealth and status cannot escape, and on that basis makes an ethical turn to reassert the commonality of an inherited maternal ethos that inequalities increasingly jeopardize. An egalitarian “modality” of sociality, therefore, is not ontologically guaranteed or paradoxically sustained by the color line; equality is an achievement that requires organized struggle of some against others, not only against formal white institutions imposing enclosure and precarity from without, but also against “informal forms” of domination or status. In its structural and intramural aspects, inequality generates and demands both inward and outward-facing forms of politics.33

For sure, efforts to engage the state and formally organized power can and do endanger the vitality of the informal practices Moten and Harney call planning, but injustice in the ordinary and the limitations of the local often compel such risks. As the Panthers or BLM activists demonstrate, tacit knowledge and vernacular idioms are recurrently translated into explicit political questions about power and justice, addressed both to and beyond the undercommon. Recurrently, subalterns thus organize representation and power in formalized (not only decentralized) ways and at wider scales, and designate a collective subject through political parties and bodies, even as idioms of “planning” inform how they exercise power and imagine community. Of course Moten knows this history, but his engagement with Arendt suggests why he insists that any effort to politicize (black) sociality is inherently self-defeating.

### 1NC – State Rejection Bad

#### Rejection fails---prevents coalitions from reaching a critical mass, feeds neoliberal elites, and turns the aff

Paul Christopher Gray 18, Brock University adjunct professor, From the Streets to the State: Changing The World By Taking Power, pg 3-7

Nevertheless, in the name of pluralism, the radical left has given way to a fractious politics that precludes substantive compromise and integrated activities. The proposed alternatives to socialist parties are coalitions or networks that are more than a movement but less than a party. But our coalitions tend to prioritize an internal focus motivated by suspicion of potential allies. This sacrifices much of our externally focused action to a new sectarianism (Reed 2000). Influenced by intellectual movements like postmodernism, post-Marxism, and identity politics, we recast our fragmentation by describing ourselves as the multitude (Hardt and Negri 2000). This turns our thorough defeats into false victories. The anti-power milieu has, in its own ways, uncritically absorbed the rampant individualism of the prevailing neoliberal capitalism just as surely as have many of the social democratic and communist parties. Second, we lack cohesive and long-term strategies. Many radical leftists now reject the idea of attempting to forge a collective will among different struggles by developing a single encompassing strategy based in universal principles. This is criticized as a rigid party line, and, in many cases, rightly so. Instead, they promote coalitions based in deliberately vague notions of anti-capitalism and the diversity of tactics in which each participating group is given enough autonomy to choose their own political activities. This fruitfully challenges narrow conceptions of “the political,” especially given how often socialist parties become co-opted into the bureaucratic, legal, and parliamentary channels of state institutions. Nevertheless, this means that our collective political positions and issues must satisfy every participant as they are presently constituted, which leads to a politics of the lowest common denominator. Furthermore, in the name of autonomy, our affinity groups neglect how each of our uncoordinated tactics inadvertently interfere with and altogether prevent those of others. Thus, the diversity of tactics necessarily becomes a disparity of tactics. Indeed, the lack of broader accountability “privileges risk-taking, regardless of whether the majority believes such risks are worthwhile, effective, or justified” (Ross 2003, 296). This adventurism further divides us as certain activists aspire to a kind of Socialism in One Person. Our organizations and strategies must be even more co-constituting than the many oppressions against which we struggle. Third, we suppress rather than solve the problem of leadership. Many radical leftists justifiably condemn the ways in which socialist parties and organizations have reproduced social inequalities through their internal relations and practices. In contrast to the often hierarchical and bureaucratic structures of socialist parties, much of the radical left now advocates for a movement of movements (Mertes 2004). Indeed, it is crucial that we decentralize and democratize our political organizations and spaces. But this usually becomes a horizontalism that rejects formal leadership. Inevitably, informal leaders emerge. Since they are privileged enough to be initiated into the unspoken rules of the informal structures, they are largely unaccountable to the communities who they claim to represent (Freeman n.d.). Because this new form of vanguardism is covert, it would be all the more pernicious had it not proven so ineffective. Fourth, we neglect the persisting importance of the state. Widespread rejections of the political party as a form of organization are often associated with the optimistic assertions that, in the age of globalization, nation-states and national struggles are of diminishing importance. Those who espouse “Think globally, act locally” correctly expose the constraints on democratic spaces imposed by international institutions, trade agreements, currency zones, and new forms of imperialism. Nevertheless, they often ignore that nation-states are not superseded by, but rather are the facilitators of, globalization (Panitch 1994, 63). The prevalent depictions of contemporary capitalism as postindustrial or postmaterialist attempt to transcend in thought the social relations we have been unable to transcend in practice. The recent waves of technological and social innovations are staggering, but they remain developments within capitalism (Albo 2007, 12). An eroding collective memory and the obsession with academic novelty tend to neglect the extent of historical continuity in our era. Indeed, the only things new under the sun are the carbon emissions that disastrously trap its rays. Finally, disengaging from the state cedes much political space and operational terrain to ruling classes. It is true, Holloway’s anti-power politics has helped to cultivate a healthy wariness of co-optation by government institutions. Nevertheless, by rejecting all electoral politics as a legitimation of the state, much of the radical left relies, often unconsciously, on an anarcho-reformism3 which can only make radical demands from outside of the state. Consequently, we allow the atrophy of the collective capacities necessary to transform the state and stifle the development of new such capacities. Furthermore, there are uncomfortable parallels between anti-power politics and the dominant neoliberal assertions that public institutions are inherently corrupt and inefficient. Ruling classes have harnessed widespread discontent with government bureaucracy to promote the marketization, privatization, and deregulation of state institutions and practices. To the extent that the radical left engages in the big refusal, we hasten these attacks on the welfare state, redistributive measures, and social programs. Indeed, the neoliberal hollowing of the state is complemented by a neo-anarchist Hollowaying of the state. By abstaining from this terrain of politics, we play the game of the neoliberals “as conscientious objectors play the game of the conquerors.”4 Surely, we cannot glorify dirty hands, “right up to the elbows” (Sartre 1989, 218). But if the anti-power milieu has clean hands, it is only because they hold them above their heads in surrender as the tide of blood creeps up their legs. Anti-power politics has proven to be as unable to challenge capitalism from outside of the state as is any purely party politics from the inside. Transcending capitalist society and the state might very well depend on reconciling the best aspects of both of these equally one-sided tendencies. Indeed, this split has divided the radical left throughout the history of its resistance to capitalism. We can describe these two long-standing tendencies as parliamentarism and extra-parliamentarism.

### 1NC – Debt Bad

#### Default wrecks the dollar.

Michael Humphries 1-30, Deputy Chair, Business Administration, Touro University, "How Bad is the Debt Ceiling Stand-Off in Congress? Like Potential Collapse of The Dollar as Global 'Unit Of Account' Bad, Economist Says," Fortune, 01/30/2023, https://fortune.com/2023/01/30/how-bad-debt-ceiling-collapse-dollar-reserve-currency-unit-trade-economist/.

Possibly the most serious consequence would be the collapse of the U.S. dollar and its replacement as global trade’s “unit of account.” That essentially means that it is widely used in global finance and trade.

Day to day, most Americans are likely unaware of the economic and political power that goes with being the world’s unit of account. Currently, more than half of world trade – from oil and gold to cars and smartphones – is in U.S. dollars, with the euro accounting for around 30% and all other currencies making up the balance.

As a result of this dominance, the U.S. is the only country on the planet that can pay its foreign debt in its own currency. This gives both the U.S. government and American companies tremendous leeway in international trade and finance.

No matter how much debt the U.S. government owes foreign investors, it can simply print the money needed to pay them back – although for economic reasons, it may not be wise to do so. Other countries must buy either the dollar or the euro to pay their foreign debt. And the only way for them to do so is to either to export more than they import or borrow more dollars or euros on the international market.

The U.S. is free from such constraints and can run up large trade deficits – that is, import more than it exports – for decades without the same consequences.

For American companies, the dominance of the dollar means they aren’t as subject to the exchange rate risk as are their foreign competitors. Exchange rate risk refers to how changes in the relative value of currencies may affect a company’s profitability.

Since international trade is generally denominated in dollars, U.S. businesses can buy and sell in their own currency, something their foreign competitors cannot do as easily. As simple as this sounds, it gives American companies a tremendous competitive advantage.

If Republicans push the U.S. into default, the dollar would likely lose its position as the international unit of account, forcing the government and companies to pay their international bills in another currency.

Loss of political power too

Since most foreign trade is denominated in the dollar, trade must go through an American bank at some point. This is one important way dollar dominance gives the U.S. tremendous political power, especially to punish economic rivals and unfriendly governments.

For example, when former President Donald Trump imposed economic sanctions on Iran, he denied the country access to American banks and to the dollar. He also imposed secondary sanctions, which means that non-American companies trading with Iran were also sanctioned. Given a choice of access to the dollar or trading with Iran, most of the world economies chose access to the dollar and complied with the sanctions. As a result, Iran entered a deep recession, and its currency plummeted about 30%.

President Joe Biden did something similar against Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine. Limiting Russia’s access to the dollar has helped push the country into a recession that’s bordering on a depression.

No other country today could unilaterally impose this level of economic pain on another country. And all an American president currently needs is a pen.

Rivals rewarded

Another consequence of the dollar’s collapse would be enhancing the position of the U.S.’s top rival for global influence: China.

While the euro would likely replace the dollar as the world’s primary unit of account, the Chinese yuan would move into second place.

If the yuan were to become an a significant international unit of account, this would enhance China’s international position both economically and politically. As it is, China has been working with the other BRIC countries – Brazil, Russia and India – to accept the yuan as a unit of account. With the other three already resentful of U.S. economic and political dominance, a U.S. default would support that effort.

They may not be alone: Recently, Saudi Arabia suggested it was open to trading some of its oil in currencies other than the dollar – something that would change long-standing policy.

Severe consequences

Beyond the impact on the dollar and the economic and political clout of the U.S., a default would be profoundly felt in many other ways and by countless people.

In the U.S., tens of millions of Americans and thousands of companies that depend on government support could suffer, and the economy would most likely sink into recession – or worse, given the U.S. is already expected to soon suffer a downturn. In addition, retirees could see the worth of their pensions dwindle.

The truth is, we really don’t know what will happen or how bad it will get. The scale of the damage caused by a U.S. default is hard to calculate in advance because it has never happened before.

But there’s one thing we can be certain of. If Republicans take their threat of default too far, the U.S. and Americans will suffer tremendously.

#### Extinction

Joshua Zoffer 20, Investor at Cove Hill Partners, Fellow at New America, JD Candidate at Yale University Law School, AB from Harvard University, “To End Forever War, Keep the Dollar Globally Dominant”, The New Republic, 2/3/2020, https://newrepublic.com/article/156417/end-forever-war-keep-dollar-globally-dominant

In early 2016, Obama Treasury Secretary Jack Lew cautioned that the dollar’s dominance as a global currency rested, in part, on the U.S. government’s reluctance to fully weaponize it. If foreign markets and governments “feel that we will deploy sanctions without sufficient justification or for inappropriate reasons,” he warned, “we should not be surprised if they look for ways to avoid doing business in the United States or in U.S. dollars.” Lew’s case stemmed from the more fundamental view that the dollar’s international role is “a source of tremendous strength for our economy, a benefit for U.S. companies and a driver of U.S. global leadership”—in other words, a role worth keeping. This view is emblematic of American financial governance since the Second World War. U.S. economic analysts, especially at the Treasury, have jealously guarded the dollar’s role and the many benefits it offers: the ability to run large deficits at low cost and disproportionate influence over the structure of the global economy, among others.

Yet in their recent article in The New Republic, David Adler and Daniel Bessner argue the U.S. should abandon these advantages. In their view, the dollar’s role has encouraged American militarism and should be relinquished to curb such behavior. Dollar hegemony is not without cost, but to renounce it would be a profound mistake. Adler and Bessner’s view neglects the sizable economic benefits the dollar’s role confers on the U.S., as well as its possible use as an antidote to military adventurism. It ignores the enormous good that can be done with deficit spending, much of which has gone to the American military but could instead fund progressive programs. And it elides the inability of the U.S. and its global trading partners to shift away from dollar dominance without creating worldwide financial distress. Adler and Bessner are right that the U.S. has misused its privilege, but Washington should not abandon it; rather, American leaders should seek to transform it.

Generations of American policymakers have been right to protect the dollar’s key currency role for economic reasons. Most notably, dollar hegemony affords the U.S. the ability to run large and prolonged budget and balance-of-payments deficits. The dollar represents 62 percent of allocated foreign exchange reserves, is used to invoice and settle roughly half of world trade, and accounts for 42 percent of global payments. Because governments, banks, and businesses worldwide need lots of dollars, the world market always stands ready to absorb new U.S.-dollar-denominated debt without charging higher interest rates.

Adler and Bessner correctly point out that the rest of the world considers the dollar’s role as the world’s reserve currency to be an “exorbitant privilege,” a term coined in the 1960s by then French Finance Minister Valéry Giscard D’Estaing. The ability to spend beyond its means has enabled the U.S. to fund its impressive military might, whether one views that power as the fountainhead of Pax Americana or the source of illegitimate military adventurism.

But these economic benefits go beyond just deficits. The demand for dollars also pushes up the dollar’s value against other currencies, enhancing American purchasing power and offering consumers access to imports on the cheap. The dollar’s role also means American firms rarely need to do business in foreign currencies, reducing transaction costs and exchange-rate risks.

More broadly, America’s central economic role gives it outsize influence at crucial moments. At the height of the financial crisis that began in 2008, the Federal Reserve was able to inject vital liquidity into the global financial system by selectively offering dollar swap lines to trusted foreign central banks. Dollar hegemony enabled the U.S. to act swiftly, effectively, and on its own terms.

In addition, the dollar’s role offers a potent alternative to kinetic military action as a means of pursuing foreign policy objectives. The dollar’s broad use means access to dollar liquidity—which in turn requires access to the U.S. financial system—is essential for foreign governments and businesses. For foreign banks, especially, being cut off from dollar access is essentially a death sentence. That makes sanctions that do so a powerful tool in the international arena.

In 2005, for example, the U.S. used the dollar to strike a devastating blow against North Korea without firing a single shot or even formally enacting sanctions. Using authority provided by Section 311 of the Patriot Act, the Department of the Treasury crippled Banco Delta Asia, a bank accused of facilitating illegal activity by the North Korean government, by merely threatening to cut off its access to the American financial system. Deposit outflows began within days; within weeks the bank was placed under government administration to avoid a full collapse. Pyongyang was hit hard, as other banks ceased their business with it to avoid meeting the same fate.

Similarly, though the Trump administration has worked hard to undo it, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran to limit the development of nuclear weapons was made possible, in part, by painful dollar sanctions that brought Iran to the table. Far from being a proximate cause of military conflict, the dollar’s central global role has often been used to contain adversaries without military intervention.

Still, skeptics are right to point out that the dollar’s role has indirectly funded American interventionism and that dollar sanctions have been overused, provoking the ire of American allies. But these facts suggest we should use our dollar power to forge a more progressive U.S. order, not abandon the advantage altogether. America’s exorbitant privilege need not fund warships and missiles: The same low-interest borrowing could be used to fund a new universal health care system, expand access to higher education, or pursue any number of large-scale social policy objectives, including financing global public goods that no other country or consortium of countries is prepared to fund, such as climate change mitigation.

### 1NC – Webb

#### Their aff is an overintellectualized approach to the real and material issues faced by black people

Webb 18—Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Sheffield (Darren, “Bolt-holes and breathing spaces in the system: On forms of academic resistance (or, can the university be a site of utopian possibility?),” Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies, 40:2, 96-118, dml)

It is easy to be seduced by the language of the undercommons. Embodying and enacting it, however, is difficult indeed. Being within and against the university, refusing the call to order through insolent obstructive unprofessionalism, is almost impossible to sustain. Halberstam (2009, 45) describes the undercommons as “a marooned community of outcast thinkers who refuse, resist, and renege on the demands of rigor, excellence, and productivity.” A romantic and appealing notion for sure but refusing and reneging on “the university of excellence” will cost you your job. When Moten describes subversion as a “series of immanent upheavals” expressed through “vast repertoires of high-frequency complaints, imperceptible frowns, withering turns, silent sidesteps, and ever-vigilant attempts not to see and hear” (2008, 1743), one is reminded instantly of Thomas Docherty, disciplined and suspended for his negative vibes.7 Being with and for the maroon community is difficult too. First of all, “Where and how can we find/see the Undercommons at work?” (Ĉiĉigoj, Apostolou-Hölscher, and Rusham 2015, 265). Where and how can one find those liminal spaces of sabotage and subversion, and how does one occupy them in a spirit of hapticality, study, and militant arrhythmia that brings the utopic underground to the surface of the fierce and urgent now? Beautiful language, but how does one live it? Networks do, of course, exist—the Undercommoning Collective, the Edu-Factory Collective, the International Network for Alternative Academia, to name but a few. These are promising spaces for bringing together and harboring the maroons and the fugitives. But networks are typically short-lived, and—as Harney and Moten warned—there is a danger of institutionalization, of taking institutional practices with you into alternative spaces “because we’ve been inside so much” (Harney and Moten 2013, 148). And so, predictably, meetings of the fugitives come with structure, order, an official agenda, and circulated minutes. The outcasts convene in conventional academic conferences, with parallel sessions, panels of papers, lunch breaks, wine and nibbles (e.g., Edu-Factory 2012). These spaces offer time out, welcome respite, a breathing space, a trip abroad, and then one returns to work. If hapticality, the touch of the undercommons, is “a visceral register of experience … the feel that what is to come is here” (Bradley 2014, 129–130), then this seems elusive. It is hard to detect a sense of the utopic undercommons rising to the surface of the corporate-imperial university. Moten describes the call to disorder and to study as a way to “excavate new aesthetic, political, and economic dispositions” (Moten 2008, 1745). But this notion of excavating is highly problematic. It is common within the discourse of “everyday utopianism”—finding utopia in the everyday, recovering lost or repressed transcendence in “everydayness” (Gardiner 2006)—to describe the process of utopian recovery in terms of excavating: excavating repressed desires, submerged longings, suppressed histories, untapped possibilities. But the fundamental questions of where to dig and how to identify a utopian “find” are never adequately addressed (see Webb 2017). Gardiner defines utopia as “a series of forces, tendencies and possibilities that are immanent in the here and now, in the pragmatic activities of everyday life” (2006, 2). But how are these forces, tendencies and possibilities to be identified and recovered? For Harney and Moten, it is through study, hapticality and militant arrhythmia. These are slippy concepts, however, evading concrete material referents. What is it to inhabit the undercommons? Those who have written of their experiences refer to “small acts of marronage” such as poaching resources and redeploying them in ways at odds with the university’s designs and demands (Reddy 2016, 7), or exploiting funding streams “to form cracks in the institution that enable the Others to invade the university” (Smith, Dyke, and Hermes 2013, 150). For Adusei-Poku (2015), the undercommons is a space of refuge which is all about survival (2015, 4–5). We who feel homeless in the university are forced into refuge. We gather together to survive. We may gain satisfaction from small acts of marronage, but this is less about bringing the utopic common underground to the surface as it is a form of “radical escapism” (Adusei-Poku 2015, 4). Benveniste (2015, v) tells us that: “The undercommons has no set location and no return address. There is no map for entering and no guide for staying. The only condition is a living appetite. Listen to its hunger for difference.” We need more than poetry, however. And we need more than a series of minor acts of resistance. As Srnicek and Williams rightly emphasize, resistance is a defensive, reactive gesture, resisting against. Resistance is not a utopian endeavour: “We do not resist a new world into being” (Srnicek and Williams 2016, 47). The undercommons, when one can find it, is a bolt hole, a place of refuge, a breathing space in the system. We need something more. The occupation Can the occupied building operate as a site of utopian possibility within the corporate-imperial university? Reflections on, and theorizations of, two recent waves of occupation—“Occupied California” 2009–2010 and the UK Occupations 2010–2011—have answered this question affirmatively. The “occupation” should not be understood here as solely or necessarily “student occupation.” It goes without saying—though sadly so often does need saying —that “faculty also have a responsibility to fight with and for students” (Smeltzer and Hearn 2015, 356). Though led by a new historical subject, “the graduate without a future” (Schwarz-WeinStein 2015, 11), the importance of faculty support for the occupations was emphasized on both sides of the Atlantic (Research and Destroy 2010, 11; Dawson 2011, 112; Holmes and R&D and Dead Labour 2011, 14; Ismail 2011, 128; Newfield and EduFactory 2011, 26). Long before Occupy took shape in Zuccotti Park, “occupation” was being heralded as the harbinger of a new society and a new way of being. If we return to the notion of creating utopian spaces, the key aim for some of the occupiers was to create communes within the university walls—to communize space (Inoperative Committee 2011, 6).8 Communization here is understood as a form of insurrectionary anarchism that refuses to talk of a transition to communism, insisting instead upon the immediate formation of zones of activity removed from exchange, money, compulsory labor, and the impersonal domination of the commodity form (Anon 2010a, 5). As one pamphlet declared: We will take whatever measures are necessary both to destroy this world as quickly as possible and to create, here and now, the world we want: a world without wages, without bosses, without borders, without states. (Anon 2010d, 34) This is a revolutionary anarchism that takes the university campus as the site for a practice—communization—that not only prefigures but also realizes the vision of a free society. Heavily influenced by The Coming Insurrection (Invisible Committee 2009), but tapping into a long tradition of anarchist theory and practice from Hakim Bey’s Temporary Autonomous Zones (Bey 1985) to David Graeber’s Direct Action (Graeber 2009), occupation becomes “the creation of a momentary opening in capitalist time and space, a rearrangement that sketches the contours of a new society” (Research and Destroy 2010, 11). It is “an attempt to imagine a new kind of everyday life” (Hatherley 2011, 123). Firth (2012) refers to these momentary openings as critical, experimental utopias: Such utopias are … simultaneously immanent and prefigurative. They are immanent insofar as they allow space for the immediate expression of desires, satisfaction of needs and also the articulation of difference or dissent. They are prefigurative to the extent that they allow one to practice and exemplify what one would like to see at a more proliferative range in the future (26) The ultimate aim is for the practice to spread beyond the campus through a dual process of provocative rupture—the idea that insurrectionary moments can unleash the collective imagination and stimulate an outpouring of creativity that blows apart common sense and offers glimpses of a future world (Gibson-Graham 2006, 51; Shukaitis and Graeber 2007, 37)—and “contaminationism,” that is, spreading by means of example (Graeber 2009, 211). It may well have been the case that communism was realized on the campuses of Berkeley and UCL, that a momentary opening in capitalist space/time appeared through which another world could be glimpsed. The occupation, however—whether California, London, or anywhere else—is likely always to remain a localized temporary disruptive practice. A practice with utopian potency, for sure, in terms of suspending normalized forms of discipline and opening new egalitarian discursive spaces (Rheingans and Hollands 2013; Nişancioğlu and Pal 2016). In terms of wider systemic change, however, “small interventions consisting of relatively non-scalable actions are highly unlikely to ever be able to reorganise our socioeconomic system” (Srnicek and Williams 2016, 29). What “the occupation” demonstrates more than anything is the reality of the corporate-imperial university, as the institutional hierarchy, backed by the carceral power of the police and criminal justice system, inevitably disperses the occupiers—often using militarized force—and repossesses the occupied space in a strong assertion of its ownership rights not only to university buildings but also to what constitutes legitimate thought and behavior within them (on this see Docherty 2015, 90). The significance, and utopian potential, one attaches to campus occupations depends in part upon the significance one attaches to the university as a site of struggle. For the Edu-Factory Collective: As was the factory, so now is the university. Where once the factory was a paradigmatic site of struggle between workers and capitalists, so now the university is a key space of conflict, where the ownership of knowledge, the reproduction of the labour force, and the creation of social and cultural stratifications are all at stake. This is to say the university is not just another institution subject to sovereign and governmental controls, but a crucial site in which wider social struggles are won and lost. (Caffentzis and Federici 2011, 26) Clearly, if this is true, then the form the struggle takes, and the example it sets, is of immense significance. Srnicek and Williams describe as “wishful thinking” the idea that the occupation might spread beyond the campus by means of rupture or contamination (2016, 35). However, if the university really is a key site of class struggle (Seybold 2008, 120; Haiven and Khasnabish 2014, 38), a site through which wider struggles are refracted and won or lost, then the transformative potential of the occupation needs to be attended to seriously. The analysis of the university offered by the Edu-Factory Collective is, however, outdated. Sounding like Daniel Bell writing in 1973 about how universities had become the “axial structures” of post-industrial society (Bell 1973, 12), the analysis does not hold water today. Moten overdoes it when he tells us that “the university is a kind of corpse. It is dead. It’s a dead institutional body” (Moten 2015, 78). What is clear, however, is that “focusing on the university as a site of radical transformation is a mistake” (Holmes and R&D and Dead Labour 2011, 13). As has been widely noted, there is very little distinguishing universities from other for-profit corporations (Readings 1996; Lustig 2005; Washburn 2005; Shear 2008, Tuchman 2009). What does separate them is their inefficiency, due in large part to the fact that universities operate also as medieval guilds, with faculties “ruled by masters who lord over journeymen and apprentices in an artisanal system of production” (Jemielniak and Greenwood 2015, 77). If the university is a sinister hybrid monstrosity—part medieval guild, part criminal corporation—which has no role other than reproducing its own privilege, then no special status can be attributed to campus protests. In this case, “A free university in the midst of a capitalist society is like a reading room in a prison” (Research and Destroy 2010, 10). A reading room in a prison. Another apposite metaphor. The occupation is a safe space, offering temporary respite, a place to hide, a refuge, a bolt-hole, a breathing space. As with the utopian classroom and the undercommons, what the occupation suggests is that “defending small bunkers of autonomy against the onslaught of capitalism is the best that can be hoped for” (Srnicek and Williams 2016, 48). Conclusion Zaslove was right to characterize utopian pedagogy within the corporateimperial university as the search for bolt-holes and breathing spaces in the system. He himself suggests that, “All university classes should become dialogic-experiential models that educate by expanding the zones of contact with wider communities” (2007, 102). Like so many others, Zaslove sees dialogic-experiential models of education beginning in the classroom then expanding outward. The literature is full of references to “exceeding the limits of the university classroom” (Coté, Day, and de Peuter 2007a, 325), “extend [ing] beyond the boundaries of the campus” (Ruben 2000, 211), and “breeching the walls of the university compounds and spilling into the streets” (Research and Destroy 2010, 10). This all brings to mind Giroux’s notion of academics as border crossers (Giroux 1992), but it also paints a picture of academics taking as their starting point the university and from there crossing the border into the community and the street. The University can be the site for fleeting, transitory, small-scale experiences of utopian possibility—in the classroom, the undercommons, the occupation. It cannot be the site for transformative utopian politics. It cannot even be the starting point for this. Given the corporatization and militarization of the university, academics are increasingly becoming “functionaries of elite interests” inhabiting a culture which serves to reproduce these interests (Shear 2008, 56). Within the university, “radical” initiatives or movements will soon be co-opted, recuperated, commodified, and neutralized (Gibson-Graham 2006, xxvi; Seybold 2008, 123; Neary 2012b, 249; Rolfe 2013, 21). Institutional habitus weights so heavily that projects born in the university will be scarred from the outset by a certain colonizing “imaginary of education” (Burdick and Sandlin 2010, 117). And we have long known that the university is but one space of learning, and perhaps not a very important one at that. Identifying the academy as the starting point for a utopian pedagogy privileges this arcane space over sites of public pedagogy such as film, television, literature, sport, advertising, architecture, media in its various forms, political organizations, religious institutions, and the workplace (Todd 1997). Perhaps the emphasis on creating radical experimental spaces within the academy needs to shift toward operating in existing spaces of resistance outside it. Haiven and Khasnabish argue that many social movements function already as “social laboratories for the generation of alternative relationships, subjectivities, institutions and practices” (2014, 62), providing “a space for experiments in knowledge production, radical imagination, subjectification, and concrete alternative-building” (Khasnabish 2012, 237). Why locate utopian pedagogy in the university when “critical utopian politics” can take place in “infrastructures of resistance” such as intentional communities, housing collectives, squats, art centers, community theatres, bars, book shops, health collectives, social centers, independent media and, increasingly of course, the digital sphere (Firth 2012; Shantz 2012; Amsler 2015; Dallyn, Marinetto, and Cederstrom 2015)? Moving beyond short-term, localized, temporary modes of resistance, utopian pedagogy would work across these sites to develop a long-term strategy and vision. There is a role for the academic in utopian politics, but not in the university-as-such. The utopian pedagogue has a responsibility to exploit their own privilege and to work with students, communities and movements outside and divorced from the university. As Shear rightly notes, academics (and especially those working in the humanities and social sciences) “inhabit a privileged space in which critical inquiry concerning social hegemony and political-economic domination” is possible (Shear 2008, 56). Within the university, however, spaces for embodying and enacting this kind of inquiry have become constrained, compromised, monitored, surveilled, co-opted, and recuperated. As I have argued throughout this article, utopian pedagogy has become a search for bolt-holes and breathing spaces in the system. Beyond the academy, however, there is a role to play. As Chomsky (2010) tells us, with privilege comes responsibility. And as Giroux frames it, this is an ethical and political responsibility to provide “theoretical resources and modes of analysis” to help forge “a utopian imaginary” (Giroux 2014a; 153; 2014b, 200). This means putting one’s knowledge and resources to use in the service of a collaborative process of memory- and story-making, pulling together disparate inchoate dreams and yearnings in order to generate a utopian vision that can help inform, guide, and mobilize long-term collective action for systemic change.